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Contents

The Week 149

Editorials

The du Ponts Testify..... 152
Townsend's $200 a Month..... 153
Advice of Counsel..... 154

General Articles

The Federal Housing Program.....Harold L. Ickes 155
One Sunday Morning.....H. S. Munroe 157
Security for Americans: V.....Paul H. Douglas 160
Washington Notes.....T. R. B. 163
Other People's Money.....John T. Flynn 164
The Heart of Man (verse).....Josephine Johnson 165
On the Labor Front.....William P. Mangold 166
It Happened Once More.....Otis Ferguson 167
Some Exceptional Recordings.....B. H. Haggin 167

Correspondence 168

Two New Plays.....Stark Young 169

Books in Review

More About Romains.....Malcolm Cowley 170
The Definitive Lee.....Allen Tate 171
The Forces Behind History....Robert Morss Lovett 172
The Great Doughface.....Newton Arvin 172
Infantry and Democracy.....Walter Wilson 173
Not So Bad.....Otis Ferguson 173
Books in Brief..... 174

The Week

THERE will be no war in Europe—at least, not this week. Working desperately behind the scenes, and to a certain extent through the machinery of the League of Nations, the Great Powers have settled the dispute which a few days ago was repeating in an ominous fashion the pattern of 1914. Hungary and Jugoslavia were ready to fly at one another's throats, the quarrel being based on the allegation that Hungary had harbored terrorist bands which were supposedly responsible for the assassination of King Alexander of Jugoslavia and French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou. Behind Jugoslavia stood the other members of the Little Entente—Czechoslovakia and Rumania—and, of course, France. Behind Hungary stood Italy, with the likelihood that Austria and Germany might also be drawn into the group. The settlement, most of which is embodied in a sickeningly hypocritical resolution of the League Council, is the usual compromise. Hungary promises to investigate terrorist activities within her borders, and a special League committee will examine into terrorism in general. Italy has suddenly abandoned her support of Hungary, which included a general proposal for revision of the treaties of 1919. It was Great Britain which worked out the solution, aided no doubt by Italian fears that the recent Franco-Italian rapprochement might be upset because of new agreements between France and Germany, arising out of the settlement of the Saar issue. The lesson of all this is something we already knew: that the Great Powers can usually prevent a war among the little countries, and that the machinery of the League is a handy convenience in doing this. But the Great Powers can, and do, achieve little in the direction of preventing war among themselves, there the League is virtually helpless, and the steady drift toward open conflict in Europe and Asia still goes on.

FOR all serious purposes, the London naval conference is now over; the remaining problem is how to end it without admitting to the world what a disastrous failure it has been. Norman Davis' speech last week in London merely confirmed what everyone knew: the United States will accept no naval ratio except the existing one of 5-5-3. Our government is prepared to see the cancellation of all agreements and an unrestricted naval-building race, believing that we can outbuild Japan, can force her to sue for terms, and that among these terms will be the restoration of the so-called Open Door in the Far East for American trade and investment. This is a desperately dangerous course of procedure. It puts upon the United States the onus of making general reduction of the fleets impossible, since there is no reason to doubt Japan's sincerity in offering a reduction of 50 percent if given "defensive equality" and it is well known that Great Britain was willing to accept some such compromise. We should not like to be in President Roosevelt's shoes if his guess turns out to be wrong, if Japan refuses to be bluffed, and if, out of the tension created by the race in naval building, there should finally come the imminent peril of war.

THE preliminary report by the Bureau of Internal Revenue on the Statistics of Income for 1933 indicates that in so far as the New Deal had any effect on the net results for that year, it was to increase the inequality in the distribution of wealth, by com-

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parison with 1932. About 100,000 fewer persons had incomes large enough to be reported. The total income reported by those having less than $25,000 a year decreased. But those receiving more than this amount reported a substantial gain. Some people moved up into the higher brackets, while many dropped down out of the lower brackets into the non-reporting class. While this class forms the vast majority of income receivers, it is not likely that the average income of its members increased, otherwise some would have risen into the reported incomes. Those with incomes of $1,000,000 or more grew in number from twenty to forty-six. The direct causes of this change are obvious. More was received in business profits and in profits from sale of property of all kinds—always one of the largest sources of income for the rich, while less was paid in wages and salaries. Manufacturing corporations, given the advantages of the N.R.A. in price fixing and production control, nearly doubled their net incomes, while a smaller but substantial gain in profits occurred in trade. Construction, transportation and public-utilities groups, not deriving the same benefits, registered a decline in net incomes. The figures amply bear out the contention of The New Republic that the chief result of the New Deal, at least in its early stages, was a substantial gain in profits. They refute the charge that N.I.R.A. discouraged business by raising labor costs first and more than profits.

IF WE are to learn anything from history except that we learn nothing from history, recent internal events in Germany must be pinned down for permanent exhibit with a big red-headed thumb tack. Hitler in his rise to power won the support of large sections of the masses by his anti-capitalist and anti-banker propaganda. The "Socialism" half of National Socialism was a powerful drawing card. He was only "anti-Marxist," anti-Jew and anti the existing and genuine labor organizations in both the political and economic fields. He had a better method than they to satisfy the legitimate complaints of the workers. Well, he has just dismissed from office and power Gottfried Feder, the father of the confused Nazi economics, Hitler's own teacher, and the intellectual source of whatever economic radicalism there was in the movement. And he has delivered a virtual economic dictatorship over to none other than the most powerful banker in the nation —Hjalmar Schacht. Schacht will govern industry and finance through the capitalistic organizations that had grown up before Hitler came to power. No socialistic nonsense will be tolerated. This tendency was evident enough before, but now it should be plain to all. What is the lesson? Labor in all countries ought to learn a thorough distrust for Fascist agitators. Anyone who opposes unions and labor parties, who accepts money from profit-seeking interests, who arouses nationalist and racial prejudices, is an unreliable instrument of social revolution.

ON DECEMBER 3 the National Labor Relations Board decided that it had jurisdiction in the case of Dean S. Jennings, former rewrite man of The San Francisco Call-Bulletin. It decided that he had been discriminated against because of organizing activity in behalf of the Newspaper Guild and ordered his reinstatement by The Call-Bulletin. This was a clear victory for the Newspaper Guild and a defeat for the publishers, who had insisted that the Daily Newspaper Code exempted them from the jurisdiction of the Board and limited the application of Section 7a, so far as they were concerned, lest the "freedom of the press" be endangered—endangered, notice, by the organization of editorial employees. This was the publishers' theory declared through Mr. Elisha Hanson, counsel for the Daily Newspaper Code.

THE day after the decision, Blackwell Smith, counsel for the N.R.A., and Donald Richberg requested the Board to reconsider, on the ground that the Jennings case should have been heard by the Newspaper Industrial Board. The Labor Relations Board agreed to reconsider and suspended its order, whereupon representatives of the Newspaper Guild walked out of an N.R.A. hearing on wages and hours of editorial workers, on the ground, as Heywood Broun announced, that "the N.R.A. is terrorized by the publishers. As long as the corridors of Mr. Richberg are filled with mysterious, high-pressure representatives of the publishers, we feel that we belong elsewhere."

WHATEVER the tactical wisdom of the Guild's withdrawal, its point is well taken. The insistence of N.R.A. counsel that the Jennings case go to the Newspaper Industrial Board is an insistence that it be buried or at least greatly delayed. The publishers —as they have shown in the strike against The Newark Ledger and in the refusal of The New York World-Telegram to sign a contract with the Guild, despite an agreement's having been reached—are taking a determined stand against the organization of their employees. They have even threatened to quit the code altogether if they are forced by the Labor Board to sign contracts with the Guild. This is no excuse for the N.R.A. to aid their delaying tactics. The N.R.A. should support the legal rights of newspaper employees under Section 7a to make contracts through the union of their own choice. If the publishers don't like it, they can come out from behind the smoke screen about protecting the famous freedom of the press and quit the code. Then we can know where we stand.

PROFESSOR Charles A. Beard, Matthew Josephson and James B. Murray have formed an independent committee for Missouri Pacific Railroad bondholders. Professor Beard and Mr. Josephson need no introduction in the pages of The New Republic. Mr. Murray, an officer of the Amalgamated Bank of New York, is a labor banker moved

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by the belief that finance need not be a shell game. The organization of the committee is welcome news. It is good to see the co-author of "The Rise of American Civilization" and the author of "The Robber Barons" step from study and exposition into the actual conference rooms of Wall Street. And it is good to see some one tackle the vast and ramshackle railroad empire of the Van Sweringens, and tackle it in its weakest and most suspicious spot: Missouri Pacific.

TREASURY figures of September 30 show that one of the greatest engines of would-be recovery, the Public Works Authority, has operated at just 25-percent efficiency. Of the allotments totaling $3,300,000,000, only $886,500,000 had so far been spent. The administration has been subject to a good deal of criticism for this delay in its spending program, but more of the criticism flows from a vague hope about "spending our way" out of the depression than from a realistic consideration of the possibilities and limitations of a great public-works program like the P.W.A. Undoubtedly there have been forces in Washington more interested in academic budget balancing than in social welfare, and perhaps Secretary Ickes has let his natural caution and fear of graft grow into a phobia of hesitation. But first and foremost it must be remembered that the country as a whole had no program of action prepared, that there was no advance planning of what could and should be done when a national industrial emergency arrived. If such a plan had been painstakingly worked up by competent engineers and economists, a great deal of the P.W.A.'s time would have been saved and its money would have been promptly available for spending where it would have been put to the best communal use. No such plan existed, however, and without it the P.W.A. has been forced to plan, or to try to plan, as it went along. As Secretary Ickes remarks in his article on page 155 of this issue of The New Republic, "nothing is more disastrous . . . than ill conceived and hasty patchwork." In the second place there have been delays over which the federal administration has no control. Most of the P.W.A. projects call for private, local or state coöperation, and in many of these, attempts have been made, for personal or local political reasons, to block worthwhile projects and, at times, to foster worthless ones. Both have often necessitated prolonged negotiations and careful sifting.

SINCE the assassination of Sergei Kirov, member of the all-powerful Political Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 127 men and women have been arrested. Of these, according to figures given out by the Soviet authorities, sixty-six were executed within twenty-four hours. The other sixty-one are being held for trial before a military tribunal of the Supreme Court. Unfortunately Moscow offers no specific indictments against the accused. That they were White Guards the world may believe or not as it choses. The doubts that remain in the minds of even the friendliest critics will not make for confidence in Soviet justice. One assumes, but without official confirmation, that those who were shot were implicated in a plot against the Soviets. All these doubts might have been dispelled by a public trial. One may agree with Karl Radek's statement in Izvestia that ". . . we prefer to shoot several hundred if necessary of the White Guard which attempts to defeat peace," and still ask proof that such a plot existed and that the men and women who were put to death were involved beyond reasonable doubt. Moscow seems to have decided on a general round-up of known counter-revolutionary elements. Numerous arrests have been made in Leningrad, Moscow, in the Ukraine and in other districts—with what justification, remains to be seen. On can only hope that the trial of Leonid Nicoliev, Kirov's assassin, will reveal the truth behind a situation that, even to the well wishers of the Soviets, forcibly recalls the thirtieth of June in Germany.

THE news that the Catholic Legion of Decency is to become a permanent organization, and that Catholics throughout the country will be asked to take a pledge to avoid all "immoral" productions, again raises the question whether this censorship will have any improving effect upon American motion pictures. It is hard to think so after reading the three lists of pictures which the Legion has passed upon as being unobjectionable, objectionable in spots, or plain indecent. In the first list, for example, out of a total of thirty-six recommendations, there are eight murder or Western films, eight musical productions, three college pictures and such outmoded stage dramas as "Anne of Green Gables" and "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch." Of the remaining fifteen not more than five are above the most discouraging level of Hollywood mediocrity.

THE second list, that of pictures objectionable only in spots, includes almost the same number of western, murder and musical films, but it also names seven productions (such as "British Agent," "Belle of the Nineties," "The Gay Divorcee") that have been received with considerable well measured enthusiasm. And on the third list, purporting to name indecent films, there are several productions that, if judged by any mature critical standard, stand out among the best of the recent Hollywood crop: "Catherine the Great," "One More River," "Ariane," "Of Human Bondage." Two things suggest themselves after a reading of these lists: First, that it is still unwise for any group to decide arbitrarily what is decent and what is not and, second, that if Hollywood producers take their clue from the Legion's white list, we shall be deluged with a steady stream of just such third and fourth-rate films as have already helped to vulgarize and debauch the taste of the average American moviegoer.

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The du Ponts Testify

NO ONE could hear last week's testimony before the Senate committee investigating munitions without feeling that control of the arms traffic is going to be immensely difficult, at least as long as munitions making remains in private hands. The testimony showed that the two chief post-war attempts to impose arms embargoes—in the case of China and the Chaco war—have been ridiculously ineffectual. It showed that the prohibitions concerning munitions manufacturing laid upon Germany by the Versailles Treaty have been blandly ignored. The 1925 Geneva conference, summoned to devise means for the worldwide regulation of the arm traffic, is revealed as a conspiracy of fraud.

Last week's testimony came largely from responsible officials of the du Pont company; probably much of it is as near the truth as we shall get. What does it disclose? Immediately after the World War, an embargo on arms shipments to China was established by the Great Powers. They had their own secret imperialist motives, but in itself the embargo was a good thing, for China and the world. However, almost as soon as it was proclaimed, violations began. A memorandum of the du Pont representative in Europe describes the formation of a great smuggling ring in Holland, composed of the munitions interests of four European nations and headed by Fritz Mandel, the same person later involved in the notorious Hirtenberg affair, in which arms were smuggled from Italy through Austria to Hungary. Letters from another du Pont representative, from Shanghai, indicate that the American and British military attachés were fully aware that the Chinese embargo was being violated, knew exactly the amounts of arms being shipped in, and through what ports they were coming. Yet neither the United States nor England showed itself willing to challenge the munitions manufacturers. According to testimony last week, the du Ponts spurned all dealings with Mandel. However, they were forced to admit selling ammunition to a "respectable" Far Eastern trading company, and providing special containers obviously designed to make it easy for the trading company to disguise the ammunition as ordinary freight.

Admittedly the Chaco war has been one of the most horrible, futile struggles of all time. In 1932, as soon as the war was fairly started, a bill was introduced in Congress permitting the United States government to impose an embargo against Bolivia and Paraguay. Bolivia was then making heavy purchases of cartridges from the Remington company, since acquired by the du Ponts. A Remington representative hastened to Washington, and obtained assurances from Department of Commerce officials that the bill would not pass. Eventually the bill died, partly through the Commerce Department's opposition and partly through the activities of Senator Bingham, at that time the open agent of the munitions companies. When, a few months ago, an embargo was finally authorized, Bolivia and Paraguay had had ample opportunity to buy up to the full extent of their credit.

Apparently all the Great Powers had guilty knowledge of Germany's arms manufacturing. As early as 1924, French and Czech munitions interests endeavored to arrange for an Allied protest to Germany. The du Ponts were invited to join. However, the du Ponts soon discovered that Nobel, Ltd., of London (founded by the same Alfred Nobel who established the peace prize), was quietly negotiating an alliance with a German munitions group to build an arms industry in Turkey. Neither Nobel, Ltd., nor the English government was interested in a protest to Germany, and none was made. A du Pont representative took the matter to our State Department, and allegedly was informed: "Yes, every Allied government is winking at violations of the Versailles Treaty by Germany. But Germany's munitions exports create credits abroad and help make possible reparations payments." The du Ponts accepted the situation with philosophic calm, and set about getting a thousand-ton ammunition order from Poland, while the Czechs and French constructed powder factories for Jugoslavia and Rumania.

The most startling case of the munitions makers' power, however, is the 1925 Geneva conference. Months before the conference, the munitions interests in the principal countries agreed upon a "united front" among themselves. It was decided their first step must be to have a representative of the industry placed on each national delegation. Lobbyists for the half-dozen leading American companies, including the du Pont company, visited the War Department, learned that Major General Ruggles would be the Department member on the United States delegation and that he was altogether sympathetic. Next they visited the Commerce Department, where Mr. Hoover, then Secretary, assured them he felt it "essential to safeguard the interests of American manufacturers." Thereupon Mr. Hoover presided approvingly over a meeting of arms makers at which the torpedoing of the Geneva conference, as far as the United States could accomplish it, was arranged. In view of Mr. Hoover's little-navy policy while President, this episode remains inexplicable. Just for good measure, the munitions companies had John Q. Tilson, House majority leader and as openly an agent of the Connecticut ammunition interests as Senator Bingham, named technical delegate. The same intriguing went on in every other country, and the result was that the 1925 conference adopted perhaps the most meaningless of all Geneva treaties.

Last week's testimony before the Senate committee makes one fact glaringly clear. The munitions industry is not only powerful in itself, but it is integrally joined to chemicals and steel, the two most basic of all industries. In capitalist countries, the likelihood of enforcing drastic control measures

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against the munitions makers, backed as they are by their allies of chemical and steel, is extremely precarious. Up to now, at any rate, attempts at regulation have been farcical. A first, small step towards peace—an almost microscopic step—would be to make munitions manufacture, at least in peacetime, a government monopoly.

Townsend's $200 a Month

AT THIS moment the most popular panacea for the economic troubles of our times is probably the Townsend plan for old-age pensions. The backers of the plan assert that a petition favoring appropriate legislation has twenty million signers. The movement has organizations in every state, and the national office is moving on Washington, where it hopes to put enough pressure on Congress to obtain the passage of the law desired. Whatever the merits or demerits of this particular plan, and whatever the exaggerations of its publicity, there can be no doubt that it will score to the extent of giving an immense impetus to some form of national legislation on old-age pensions.

Unlike many of the gadgety new ideas, this one seems like simplicity itself. It proposes that the United States government offer to every citizen over sixty years of age the privilege of retiring on a pension of $200 a month, on three conditions: (1) that he does not work for money any more, (2) that he has not been a habitual criminal, and (3) that he promises to spend the whole of each month's pension within thirty days after receiving it, and spend it within the United States. The money necessary to pay the pensions is to be raised by a sales tax. This is supposed to supply a "revolving fund" —the money collected is immediately spent again by the pensioners, is taken in again by tax, and so on.

Who, if he thought such a thing possible, would not sign the petition?

But is it possible? Dr. Townsend argues not only that it is, but that it will cure the depression. He merely points to the truism that we now have an immense unused capacity to produce, but lack the ability to buy what can be made. Put this new stream of money into circulation by the purchases of all the people over sixty, and the machinery will hum. Unemployment will be ended, and the millennium will be here.

What he fails to see—although it has been pointed out to him—is that there is a fatal trick in the manner in which the money is to be raised. If curing the depression were as simple as this, all the government would have to do would be to levy a sufficiently large sales tax and spend the proceeds for anything whatsoever. The trouble with a sales tax is that it takes money from purchasers of goods. Consumers who pay the tax have just that much less to spend. Suppose 12,000,000 eligible persons applied for pensions at $2,400 a year. That would mean that the government would have to impose a sales tax sufficiently large to yield $28,800,000,000. Such a tax, applied to present retail sales, would be of the order of 100 percent. All of us would suddenly be compelled to pay at least twice as much for everything as we do now. And none of us, except those over sixty, would have any larger incomes than we now have, out of which to pay the prices. It is silly to contend that the enlarged purchases of the pensioners would more than offset our inability to buy. Probably the contrary would be true. The high prices would so discourage sales to the majority of the population that they would buy even less than half as much as before. Many people would be forced to go cold and hungry. To apply a sales tax for any purpose is unjust to those with the lowest incomes, and to do so is simple madness during a depression, if the aim is to assist recovery.

If more money is to circulate than is circulating, it must come from sources that are now idle, not from the incomes or purchases of the masses. The backers of the Townsend plan, who are presumably honest though economically naïve, might be brought to see this point and accept a different method of raising funds. One obvious way is by a graduated income tax bearing heavily on the higher brackets. This would avoid taking the money from the poor as through a sales tax. But it requires only a little arithmetic to show that the heaviest conceivable tax of the kind would not provide the revenue necessary to pay $200 a month to everyone over sixty, or anything like it. To follow this line is to come down to the much more modest proposals of the standard old-age-pension movement. We can raise by direct taxation enough to pay small pensions to those actually destitute, and there is no reason in the world why we should not do it. It is possible to substitute the pension system for the old and less humane poor house without any increase in public expenditure at all, or even with a decrease; somewhat larger pensions depending on extra income taxation are therefore entirely possible.

Much larger pension expenditure might be financed if the government in some way created the money rather than raised it by tax levies. It might print greenbacks for the purpose, or use the more disguised but equally effective method of borrowing bank-created credit. But here, as in all other governmental expenditures financed in a similar way, we run into the problem of inflation. If sufficiently large amounts are poured out into the markets for goods, the increase of demand in relation to supply will increase prices. Wherever shortages develop, profits will mount skyward. Business and employment do become active on the way up, but in the end inflation means, like a sales tax, a diminished purchasing power on the part of those with small incomes, since prices will rise more rapidly than wages or fixed stipends. Inflation in its later stages is really a concealed form of taxation, for the benefit of the owners of natural resources and industry.

Does this mean that there is no way of taking advantage of unused production capacity for the

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benefit of the aged or of other potential consumers? By no means. The Townsend plan, like so many other one-shot panaceas, sees the basic situation, and states a half-truth, or a quarter-truth, about it. It is indeed necessary to place and maintain in the hands of the masses more purchasing power. If this can be done, there is the technical possibility of making the goods with which to satisfy their demands. But there is no way in which the government can do it—except the purely temporary and self-defeating way of inflation—without taking over the more important functions of private capitalism. In the end there must be planned social control over prices, wages, production and the amount and use of profits, if any such scheme is to work.

Advice of Counsel

AN EXTRAORDINARY document is the "Opinion of James M. Beck and Newton D. Baker, rendered to Mr. Thomas N. McCarter, president of the Edison Electric Institute," announcing the confident conclusion of those two eminent lawyers that the legislation establishing the T.V.A. is "palpably unconstitutional." Handsomely printed, the opinion has now been made available for public consumption—the purpose, it sufficiently appears, for which it was originally prepared.

Of Mr. Beck's share in this enterprise little need be said. He has already publicly condemned as unconstitutional the greater part of the pre-Roosevelt federal bureaucracy. Enlargement of this malediction to include the T.V.A. should have caused no flurries in the stock market. It is only because of Mr. Baker's participation that the episode is worth a moment's thought. Enough of the aura of public confidence that used to attach to leaders of the American bar still hangs about him to lend special weight to his words. The voice is the voice of paid counsel, but to many ears it may sound as the judgment of the distinguished and disinterested public servant, once heir-apparent of Woodrow Wilson.

Of course it is no such thing. Messrs. Baker and Beck have not submitted an "opinion" at all, but a brief—not even a brief such as serious and intelligent lawyers would present to the Supreme Court, but a brief calculated by a wealth of solemn citation to impress a lay public. The candor of the authors is exhausted by a single introductory sentence: "Nor can the importance of the question be brushed aside by saying that it has long since been settled by some sweeping decision or decisions of the highest court interpreting the Constitution; for there are no such decisions, and the question is an open one."

The question is still an open one. So are virtually all constitutional issues of any moment in these times. Mr. Baker knows well enough (one can never be sure about Mr. Beck) that a question of the scope of federal power under the commerce clause, for example, is not concluded by citation of the child-labor cases and the first federal employers' liability cases, even when the citation is reasonably in point. He would surely advise his client, if he spoke for the client's ear alone, that it is exceedingly doubtful whether those cases would now be decided as they were years ago, let alone extended to foreclose a disparate problem. He must know that impressive historical evidence can be marshaled for the proposition that the commerce clause was intended by the framers as a plenary grant of national power, adequate to all circumstances in which action by the several states might be inadequate; that still more impressive reasons of statesmanship reënforce the same conclusion. He knows, especially, that far-reaching issues of constitutional interpretation never have been solved by petty juggling of small-minded precedents, or even of large-minded ones. He also knows that the Supreme Court will weigh considerations of policy transcending argumentative accusations of destruction of private business before it informs the country that the federal government is powerless to minister to weighty public needs.

No prophecy is implicit in these observations that the Supreme Court will sustain the T.V.A. under the commerce power, rather than any other power, or indeed that it will sustain it at all. Many sources of congressional power are involved. They admittedly support the activities of the Authority in certain phases, if not clearly in their full sweep: the power to protect and promote navigation, the war power, the power to deal with problems of flood control, authority to administer and dispose of property of the United States. Messrs. Beck and Baker do not deal with the most serious technical objection to their position, but postpone it for consideration in a later brief; namely, whether means exist by which the issue can be presented for judicial decision.

What is certain is that, if and when the issue is presented, the Justices, at least a majority of them, will not think in the same terms as these lawyers. It is perhaps only of minor importance that the lawyers (at least one of them) probably do not think in those terms themselves. They are using the prestige of great names to clothe private claims with the appearance of constitutional sanction.

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The Federal Housing Program

A Progress Report by Secretary Ickes

During the last eighteen months, the housing program of Secretary Ickes has several times been criticized in The New Republic, in editorials, signed articles and correspondence. We are therefore particularly glad to give space to the appended statement by Secretary Ickes, which both describes his housing philosophy and reports recent progress.—THE EDITORS.

FOR THE first time in our history the federal government has undertaken a program of slum clearance and low-cost housing in order to provide decent living conditions for those in the lowest income classes. If this program is to produce such housing on a self-sustaining basis it must be well conceived and carefully developed. We must avoid both the shoals and the rocks. I can imagine nothing more disastrous to the whole idea of housing and slum clearance than ill conceived and hasty patchwork that would merit the criticism of the country.

The need for low-cost housing in the United States has long been recognized, but there has been little understanding of what is necessary to be done in order to supply that need. There is little argument about the desirability of decent housing at low rentals—the sleazy and slovenly American slum is a potent testimonial of itself—but there is apparently a strong diversity of opinion as to how to go about getting such housing.

There are some who apparently would have us produce housing, hasty-pudding fashion, overnight. Some enthusiasts impatiently refuse to admit the variety and the magnitude of the problems confronting the government in its endeavors to institute low-cost housing in our cities. Others, seeing in the housing movement merely an opportunity for profit for themselves, are as impatient as the theorists at even reasonable delays. They want their profits and they want them quickly—that is the extent of their interest. Still another group has only the vaguest possible impression of what it wants or how to go about getting it. But it too wants the federal government to do something about something and do it quickly.

The Public Works Administration, under which the slum-clearance program is going forward, is more interested in results than in theories. We recognize our responsibility to complete the task at hand as rapidly but also in as workmanlike a manner as possible. But we have an even greater responsibility to the ideal of slum clearance itself. no one in the United States can doubt that it is not only possible but desirable to clean out our reeking slums. We would be doing a disservice to the principle of slum clearance if, yielding to the uninformed criticism of feet-on-desk critics, we should permit ourselves to produce results so badly conceived, so wretchedly planned and so flimsily built that the effect would be to discredit for a generation to come the most desirable social objective toward which the government is moving at this time.

While disappointed claimants for the privilege of using the Federal Housing Division of the Public Works Administration as a vehicle for experimenting with immature or ill conceived ideas bewail their personal disappointment in the language of the disillusioned idealist, the federal government not only has set a worth-while program of slum clearance and low-cost housing in motion, but is now on the point of breaking into quick step toward the goal toward which we have been striving. Under the initial handicap of having no precedents in this country to guide us, with no administrative set-up prepared to undertake the task, after an unavoidable delay we have developed both the technique and the personnel adequate to achieve results. We are definitely on our way, as I am confident anyone who comes to look into the matter with honest and intelligent eyes will be convinced.

As concrete evidence of the social changes being wrought by the Roosevelt administration, low-cost housing projects are now going forward in a large number of our cities. Of the eight limited-dividend projects on the program, involving allotments totaling $13,141,600, one has been completed, five are under construction and two are ready to start. These projects will provide a total of 3,135 living units.

Eleven federal projects are in various stages of actual progress in New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Detroit, Montgomery and Louisville. For these projects, condemnation of land has been started or sites have been acquired or are being optioned. Slums have actually been torn down in Atlanta, and a contract let for wrecking in Montgomery. These eleven projects will involve a total expenditure of $74,500,000, and will supply 18,134 living units.

In addition we have authorized eighteen projects at a cost of $37,036,500 that have not been announced, but in connection with which preliminary surveys have been completed and on many of which

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projects will provide an additional 10,137 living units. Eleven more projects, to cost $12,911,000 and to provide 3,700 dwellings, are being whipped into shape for approval by December 1. Enough projects to take up the small balance of the approximately $150,000,000 that has been made available for federal slum-clearance projects will be ready shortly thereafter.

The projects actually under way, those approved, and those to be approved by December 1, will provide 35,106 individual dwellings.

To establish the machinery and the administrative set-up necessary for the mass production of more than 35,000 dwellings is no mean task. It would be a large order for a private corporation unhampered by such restrictions as attach to government operations. But not only has the administrative organization required to handle such a program been established, the details of projects scattered through some thirty-three cities have been worked out, land has been purchased, condemnation proceedings have been started, contracts for demolition let and local architects engaged. Citizens' committees have been set up in numerous cities where housing authorities are lacking. A court ruling upholding the public policy of low-cost housing has been obtained.

Policies have been decided. A year ago there was no such thing as a Public Housing Authority in the United States and no legislation authorizing the creation of such an agency. There is now such enabling legislation in nine states. A large number of cities recently have acquired Housing Authorities. This means substantial, if slow, progress for housing that is not to be underestimated.

The housing program is moving inexorably forward and construction will be well under way on at least fifteen projects by next spring. Anyone whose point of view is not jaundiced would readily admit, after a dispassionate review of the facts, that, since its necessary reorganization, the Housing Division of P.W.A. has accomplished an enormous amount of work. It has corrected its early mistakes. It has overcome its initial handicaps. It is just clear of its pioneering stages and is ready for a truly great housing program.

Social need is the justification for low-cost housing. To meet this need, land and buildings must be brought together, and, by efficient management and technique, synthesized into a complete and workable housing result. However far our students may have carried their studies of social need and whatever may have been their conception of appropriate architecture, they never made much progress with the technical process of bringing land and buildings together to form an actual housing project. There was little opportunity for them to do so. A municipal, state or national housing program in this country never got beyond the realm of theory until recently. A few isolated housing experiments were tried by the benign wealthy but few of them produced low rentals.

Lacking an opportunity to work with situations other than those that could be developed over the drafting board or in census or social studies, our experts developed a tendency to think of housing principally as an architectural and sociological problem. A technique for putting all the elements of housing together was not developed. The part the option negotiator might play in creating a project was not understood and the fundamental details involved in piecing all parts of a project together were dismissed as "local problems."

After the Housing Division began to function, it soon became apparent that "local problems" form the stuff of which projects are made. It was thought at first that these local problems could be resolved by private initiative, that limited-dividend groups, borrowing 85 percent of their capital from P.W.A., could organize and operate their own projects. An invitation went out for the formation of limited-dividend corporations to provide low-cost housing for this country. Our much vaunted private initiative, as so often happens when the goal is a social good instead of a private profit, was unable or unwilling to undertake much that was worth while. With the failure of private enterprise to provide low-cost housing, even with government aid, the Housing Division decided it would have to do its own constructing and operating.

The Division proceeded to execute a right wheel, almost a right-about-face, and moved forward with its federal program. Whereas it had been organized to function in a supervisory capacity over private projects, it was now necessary to reorganize in order to handle a direct program, capable of indefinite expansion. Sound business procedure had to be adopted. Practical administrators, builders, real-estate experts, planners and architects had to be engaged. The job of providing housing was seen to be a business proposition of acquiring land and constructing buildings to meet a certain, definitely known need that had been established by careful investigation.

The working out of the necessary new technique was slow. We had to learn by experience the most effective methods of assembling land. We were not satisfied to take the first land offered at the price asked; the cost of land is too vital a factor in the rent to be charged to permit of such reckless business methods. We had to determine the most economical methods of construction, the best materials for our purposes. We had to dicker with city councils, with social agencies, with racial groups. Above all we preferred to keep our feet on the ground, to build soundly rather than hastily, to the end that what we produced would be true low-rental housing. To produce well wrought housing would be to lay the foundations for a really comprehensive housing program for this nation; to act precipitately and ill advisedly would be to create a faulty, expensive product which by its inevitable failure would weigh down low-cost housing in the United States for many years.

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Housing under the administration's program is designed to be self-liquidating. With the exception of the 30-percent grant, authorized by Congress for certain P.W.A. projects, the money used in financing this low-cost housing will be returned to the Treasury through the collection of rents. The United States Congress has not authorized an era of Vienna housing, capital costs of which would be paid by the taxpayer, leaving rents to be based on operation and maintenance alone.

To make our projects pay out, and at the same time keep rentals low, preferably around $5 and $6 a room a month, calls for great ingenuity on the part of our managers, architects and builders. It also requires minimum costs for land. I have no apologies to make for keeping such costs down. It is apparent to all but the willfully blind that prudence must be exercised in obtaining property. Careful work on the part of our land-accumulation branch and of our inspection division has made possible the acquisition of sites by friendly negotiations at prices which will permit low-cost results. Condemnation proceedings have had to be resorted to principally as a method of clearing title.

Our care in keeping down our land costs has called for more sneers from those who clear slums between courses at conference luncheons than any other part of our program. Those who sneer are above such vulgar practices as bargaining for land until the lowest possible price of slum areas can be obtained. They are especially indignant that careful appraisements should be made by experts and investigators sent out to check on figures that seem too high. They refer to it as "falling over Mr. Glavis' investigators." Some of these critics for so many years have impressed themselves and their friends with their profound and exclusive knowledge on the subject of housing that they seem to fear they will lose their vogue if slum clearance in this country is actually brought down out of the clouds and placed firmly on terra firma, where it belongs. It all goes to prove the danger of toying too long with a naked idea. The man who makes this mistake is likely, too late, to discover that he has merely become futile.

If we are to make out a case for low-cost housing and slum clearance in this country we cannot afford to make serious mistakes. Since our job must be well done, we intend to do it as well as we know how. Moreover, housing must be able to pay its own way. This means low-cost land, because land is such an important element in rents, careful planning, economical, but substantial, building and scientific management. Jerry-building, hastily conceived and executed on high-priced land, would be the greatest blow that could be struck at the cause of low-cost housing. If I were trying deliberately to sabotage the housing movement in this country, I could adopt no better course than to heed the cries of the critics of the housing program and make speed my goal instead of building as finished and perfect a product as it is possible to produce.

The Housing Division of P.W.A. is looking much further into the future than the expenditure on housing projects of the mere $150,000,000 that has been allocated to it to date for that purpose. We hope that, under the socially minded leadership of President Roosevelt, the housing program will be greatly expanded next year. We venture to envisage future years when the country will be so impressed with the desirability of decent housing for all of our citizens, and so convinced, on the basis of past experience, that desirable housing can be achieved at a cost within the reach of all, that the nation, as well as the states and municipalities, will join in a movement, supported by private capital, that will provide a home, fit for human beings, for every American family. That is what we are building for. We feel that we will be committing a grave social sin if what we do now in the way of slum clearance and low-cost housing is of such a sort as will discredit this great movement for the happiness and welfare of the people. HAROLD L. ICKES.

One Sunday Morning

WHISTLER'S picture had a brass rail in front of it. Well, what's so hot about that pitcher? Just an old dame lookin' at nothin'. Who'd ever sit up sideways to a bare wall thataway? It ain't bare: see them pitchers? That's kind of funny, see? This fellow Whistler he painted a pitcher, and in this pitcher he puts some pitchers of some little pitchers. She ain't lookin' at 'em. Was it his real mother? Go buy a catalogue, go buy a catalogue. It says here, An Arrangement in Gray and Black. Say, what's the idea? A composition! She ain't writin' no composition. Maybe she is thinking one up. Just the same it's a swell pitcher: she looks exac'ly like an old lady sittin' down. It's about the most famous pitcher in the world. Sure. The Frogs gave up one million dollars for that pitcher alone. That's how Whistler got to be a millionaire.

The brass rail had just started its comeback. This one was for your thighs, though, or your stomach, depending on how tall you were; it wasn't for your instep. It was to keep the crowd off the Mother. Everybody was strong for Motherhood that day. All the preachers put up a special prayer for Mothers that beautiful May morning. Everyone surged up to the rail, stared awhile and then went away. There was awe in that room.

The famous piece of composition was flanked on either side by a picture that had a whole lot more than composition. One was a Homer. He had seen light shimmer on a slowly heaving sea. Men in a dory hauled silvery fish. Men and fish belonged to the sea; even they had a touch of light and infinitude. Let there be light. God said that, and so did Winslow Homer.

On the other side of the headliner hung an Inness. Who ever heard of him? Well, I have; but

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I thought he always went in for smoky nasturtium schemes—a sort of subdued Turner. Evidently not. This blue haze, shrouding bay and town, why, it's like Monet. Not just color, either, but a sense of

> We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

They came and went. They bumped the brass rail. Scarcely anyone looked at the lighted sea or the blue mist or even the slick little Sargent, flat and vapid on the opposite wall. In the permanent collection, in another room, where no foot fell save the guards' all that morning, the Museum's solitary Rembrandt glowed like a heart on fire.

Eleven-thirty chimed from the Georgian tower of the Johns Hopkins, whence life had fled the day before. Only a few graduate students, goaded by a dream of doctordom, and a professor or two catching up on the learned journals in the unwonted quiet of the main reading-room. They did not hear the bells; but several people in front of the brass rail looked at their watches.

II

The preacher cleared his throat. To be more exact, he cleared precisely one hundred and forty-four, a gross of throats. (I may not have counted all the Negro brethren.) Over most of the white throats a spire stuck up vertically. From under it life had fled nearly a week before. For six days it had drooped a little; all week the city was punctuated with lolloping exclamation points, languid symbols of whatever they symbolized. For six days the spires rested, but on the seventh they had to get to work. This was the day the spires straightened up. They were, so to speak, reinflated. It was the spires' day and the ministers' hour.

The music, concession to the weakness and worldliness of the congregations, was still. The prayers, tailored to the day's exigencies by the evangelicals, ready-made for the Catholics and Anglicans—the petitions, requests, pleas, demands, advice, sermons *in nuce*, entreaties, explanations, remonstrances, thank-you notes, all were over. For thirty minutes there would be the deuce to pay. The Devil would leave town. In Hell itself the Fiend's ears would feel an extra tingling.

Back of these thirty minutes, beginning at eleven-thirty, lay an incredible amount of real estate and architecture, artistry in glass and wood, quarrying, cultivation of the singing voice, Greek and Hebrew grinding, Browning and Blake searching, organ building, book making, minor feather dusting and bell pulling. All for this morning and this evening, one hour of each. And the evening and the morning were the seventh day—but not the whole of it, not by a long shot. Eleven-thirty boomed in the middle of it.

I forgot the Fourth Estate, and newsprint manufacture. Trees grew to make the religious advertising page in Saturday's Sunpapers. It told what they would preach about, and they did. Dr. Drily preached on "Is the Earth More Than Six Thousand Years Old?" Dr. Slyly on "Was Your Grandmother a Monkey?" Plain Mr. Smiley, M.A. (not honorary), on "Happy Am I." Dr. Biley *on* "A Modern Gomorrah." Dr. Shyly on "What the World Owes to Its Mothers." Dr. Cryley on "Did I Ought to Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier?" Dr. Pryly on "Will There Be Sex in Heaven?" Dr. Wiley on "Selling the Gospel to People Like You or I." Dr. Highly on "The Menace of a Fetid Intellectualism." Father Patrick F. X. Riley and the Reverend S. O. S. Vilely, D.D. (Upper Ozark Baptist Institute), had the same thought: "Is Birth Control Christian?"

They all started from scratch at 11:30. Some finished at 11:50, some went on till 12. By 12:05 everyone was on the way home. Upwards of thirty thousand decapitated chickens awaited their coming. Baltimore was pervaded by the odors of sanctity and good cooking.

III

Not on Squeem Street. The woman who had been married fifteen years and was brought to bed of her fourteenth child did no cooking. She stared at the ceiling but did not see it. Thirteen times she had been game to get up again, but not this time. She heard buzzing instead of words. There was a district nurse. Blue cape, little blue hat, blue flies, blue nurse. Buzzing. Think of your children. I want to die. Think of this little baby. Let me die.

How much did your husband give you? How much is he making? Are you supposed to feed this family till next Sunday on two dollars? Let me die. What does he do with it? When did he start? When the first baby came. Fourteen years ago. A hundred years ago. I was nineteen. Come, you're a young woman still. A hundred. Come, you must make an effort. Let me die. Why did you keep on having babies? What could I do? The clinic. They say it ruins a man's health. Not the clinic's way. Now, won't you make an effort? You can't leave these little children to shift for themselves. It's up to you. It's up to you. It's up to you.

The woman who had given birth to fourteen babies in fifteen years turned her face to the wall. Like Whistler's Mother she looked at nothing, for this wall really was bare. She showed no interest when the nurse asked the children what they had eaten for breakfast. The children said, "Nothing." The clock on an East Baltimore spire struck once. But it meant eleven-thirty.

IV

Tantivy, tantivy, tantivy! Golden horn, scarlet coats, smell of sleek horseflesh, eager yapping of dogs. Tantivy, tantivy, tantivy! What should a man do at half after eleven o'clock on a beautiful, beatiful morning? Or a red-blooded she-woman, for that

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matter? (The children? safe in their boarding schools, to be sure.) Do ye ken John Peel? Ah, it's great to be alive in the Green Spring Valley. Praise God, ride hard, follow the hounds to the death. How does the fox enjoy it? Oh, the foxes love it, too. Tantivy, tantivy, tantivy!

V

Motherhood is a sacred thing. Speaking as a scientist, Mother Nature intended woman for motherhood. Ahem! I have never had a contraceptive appliance in my house. Ahem! Gentlemen of the Committee, speaking as a scientist, I warn you that if this bill passes, the moral fiber of our nation will disintegrate, the American home will go bust, the Constitution will be amended, the Y.M.C.A. will perish. I ask you, gentlemen, speaking as a mother—I mean as a scientist—to think of the future of this Republic. Consider Washington, Hamilton, Marshall and Harding. Are you prepared to betray the country they gave us into the hands of Margaret Sanger and Marie Stopes?

The great astronomer paused. Should he bring Harry Fosdick into the picture? Usually the eminent scientist went to church; but since he was scheduled to appear at the committee hearing in Washington on Monday morning, he knew the Lord would excuse his taking time out to formulate a few notes. He went back to his non-astronomical but very scientific formulas just as the cuckoo on the study wall thrust out its little head and announced eleven-thirty.

Let there be light. Bach and Shakespeare and Newton and Rembrandt and Locke and Kant and Einstein and Blavatski all said it in their several ways. Much can be done indoors as well as under an apple tree. Some men do their best work under a north light, but our astronomer's study lacked even that. He bent again over his notes, peering at them in the dimness, his brow furrowed, his jaw set.

VI

The great pianist shed his coat. It would be more genteel to say he removed it, but that would not be true. It lay on the floor, whither his vest soon followed it, or as some say, his waistcoat. No one knows how far back the grave-diggers' garment-stripping goes—the grave-diggers in "Hamlet," I mean.

The great pianist's peeling act was not for fun. Things were going badly. At 9:15 that evening he would walk out on the stage where his coat and vest now reposed, sit down again before this same monumental Knabe and perform the Blavatski concerto. It was not his own powers, nor the Knabe's, that the great pianist doubted. The plain fact was that the orchestra was not ready, and the greatest pianist in the world can't do the Blavatski concerto alone.

"Come on! come on!" shouted the maddened virtuoso. The score was marked *accel.,* but the band lagged half a beat. The great pianist played with his right hand and began beating time with his left. "God damn you! come on!" he yelled. The conductor waggled his stick. He was a very distinguished trombonist, but the truth was, at least from his point of view, that there hadn't been time to rehearse the orchestra properly. They had gone through their parts once or twice, but not with the pianist, who was an outsider, engaged at the behest of the box office.

The great man had a curious rolling motion. He played with his shoulders. He clawed into the vitals of the monstrous Knabe, clutched them and squeezed them to his own huge chest. Sweat poured from his forehead and dampened the keys. This had been going on now for two hours and a half. And still the orchestra could not follow him. There was an excruciating sound of tearing linen—the great pianist's collar sailed out over the first five rows of empty seats. His solid-gold collar button, a present from the Tsar, rolled and rolled and rolled.

He was an artist, all right. Not because he afterwards split his shirt down the back nor because he swore in six languages including the Corsican, his native tongue. He was not just a piano-player: he was a musician. He turned himself into that concerto. His demoniac energy and devotion filled the great frame of the Knabe and swept up the tiers of the orchestra. It began to obey him, and through him the composer. The pianist started to cry. He pounded the keys, hurled the time at the sluggish bull fiddles, shouted profane commands to the uncertain brasses, and all the while loved the music to the point of weeping over it.

Later on the hurricane subsided. Tenderly the Knabe *sang,* sang like a tender woman a melody of pure love and heartbreak. Now the orchestra was too fast, and far too loud and choppy. "Legato!" yelled the great pianist. He was weeping more furiously than ever. "Legato! Christ! Legato!" Finally he stopped playing. A taxi honked outside. It might have been the last straw. But the clock on the station struck the half hour. It was eleven-thirty.

"Maestro," said the concert-master, ignoring the conductor, "we know we are not giving you what you want. Let us try again. We will do our best to please you. We will stay here all day."

"Back to M, please," said the conductor. "Now, men, this is legato. Try to give me a little more la-la."

At this point two of the great pianist's suspender buttons came off and his pants began to slide. He yanked them up, stormed on four hours more, licked the orchestra into shape, and finished the rehearsal in his undershirt.

That night the Philmelodic surpassed itself. The people in the boxes congratulated themselves, God knows why. Probably they felt complacent about the progress their orchestra had been making.

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They thought the pianist's contorted style of playing rather funny. He did not care. He went away for forty minutes into a world mostly composed of light and wonder, though there were blood and tears in it, too.

VII

It was 11:30 A.M. in Baltimore. Allowing for the difference in computing standard time, it was much the same hour in every other city and town. For example, a few hours before it had been eleven-thirty in Rome, Italy, where, a few hours before that, the Emperor Nero had just finished explaining his conception of how to celebrate Mothers' Day. He had ideas about everything, including art, and refused to play the Mendelssohn concerto for violin the night the city burned, despite a request signed by a former ambassador and several prominent residents of the Green Spring Valley. He thought it a trifle saccharine for that well lighted occasion, though then as now the public adored it.

H. S. MUNROE.

Security for Americans

V: *Unemployment Insurance and Relief*

THE PRIMARY purpose of unemployment insurance is to obtain a better distribution of the risks of unemployment. Through the contributions by or on behalf of the many, funds are accumulated which are then disbursed as benefits to the minority who at any one moment are unemployed. What would otherwise be a crushing burden for those upon whom unemployment falls is, therefore, lightened by being spread over many shoulders. And yet each worker is assured of at least partial protection should he be unlucky enough to lose his job. Unemployment insurance, therefore, is seen to be essentially similar, as Mr. Epstein has pointed out, to other forms of insurance such as that for marine losses, fire and disability. Its primary purpose is protection through the pooling of risks. While other features, such as the reduction of unemployment, are desirable supplements to this purpose, they are not and should not be the primary aim. Since the wider the pooling of risks, the greater in general will be the protection afforded, plans which confine the insurance reserves to a particular company or industry are patently inferior from an insurance standpoint to those that cover a state or group of states as a whole. As this principle becomes better understood, informed students of the question are increasingly turning from the plant reserve or Wisconsin system to statewide pools. An excellent example of this is seen in the recent frank reversal of position by Alvin H. Hansen and Merrill G. Murray of Minnesota.

There is danger, however, that both the public and the administration will overestimate the amount of protection that unemployment insurance can be expected to give, and that they will therefore disregard other necessary forms of aid to the unemployed. Thus, at various times certain officials in Washington have been credited by the press as declaring that if we once institute unemployment insurance and carry through other programs such as subsistence homesteads and slum clearance, then in a year or so the relief rolls will be wiped clear.

This view is a grotesque misunderstanding of the situation and if it comes to be widely entertained the results are likely to be disastrous. For it is likely to discourage national and state governments from providing the relief funds that for the moment are needed far more acutely than is unemployment insurance itself. The plain truth of the matter is that in spite of the great worthiness of the projected housing program, it cannot absorb more than a fraction of the nine or ten millions who are unemployed today. In spite of the efforts of the administration, there will still be many millions of unemployed next year who, with their reserves further exhausted, will be in worse need than ever. These men and women, in the nature of the case, cannot be covered by a system of unemployment insurance as such. For in order to be eligible for benefits under an insurance plan, a worker must have had a prior period of employment during which contributions have been made by or for him. This minimum period has been variously set in the numerous proposals that have been advanced, but in practice if the plan is to conform to insurance principles, contributions will need to have been made during twenty weeks in the previous year, or thirty-four weeks in the two years preceding. Men who continue to be unemployed throughout this period will, therefore, be unable to acquire eligibility under the act and will not benefit from it. Unless relief is provided for them, they will fall in no-man's land.

It should also be understood that benefit payments for those who acquire eligibility and later lose their jobs cannot begin for at least fifteen and perhaps even twenty-one months. For even with the greatest speed by Congress and the states, the collection of premiums under a federal-state plan can hardly start before July 1 of next year, while in all probability the actual date will be appreciably later. Then a subsequent period will follow during

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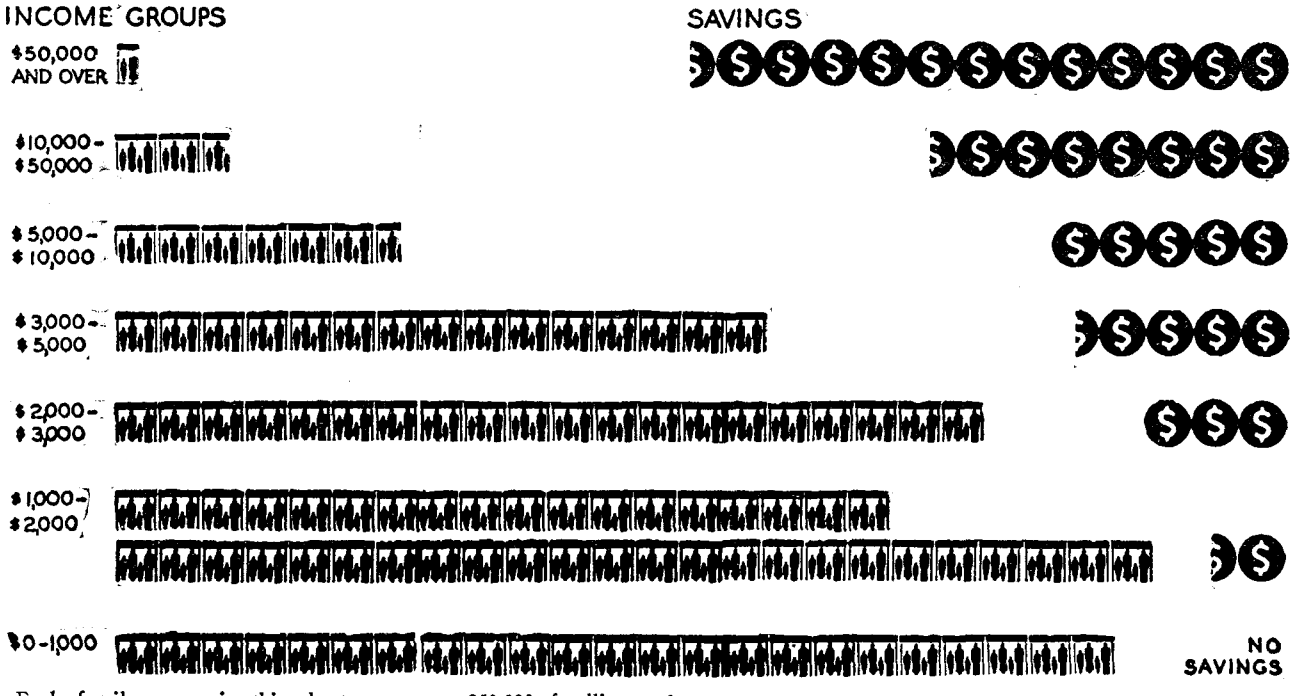
which contributions will be accumulated and eligibility acquired. This will consume at least another six months and perhaps even a year. Consequently, the actual payment of benefits to those covered by the act cannot really be commenced before 1936, while every delay will further postpone the beginning. Therefore, those who expect insurance to remove the need for relief within the next two years are living in a fool's paradise from which the rude pressure of events will ultimately awaken them. But in the meantime, much damage may be done. For a considerable period to come the federal government will have to make very large appropriations for relief in order to protect those at present out of work.

Still more important than this, however, is the fact that even when unemployment insurance is well under way the need for an adequate relief program, in prolonged periods of depression or technological unemployment, while lessened, will still be great. The great merit of insurance is that it does not compel people to use up their individual savings and become virtually destitute before they can receive protection, and it is this that makes it superior to an outright relief system which must necessarily be inadequate and humiliating and is frequently uncertain as well. It is this that makes insurance far preferable to the public maintenance of the unemployed which is now being advocated by certain social workers. For the latter plan, in view of the present distribution of political power, would mean that relief would only be given to those in need, with the result that the unemployed would be ground down into a condition of mass destitution before aid was given. But insurance, although highly desirable, can only provide an initial cushion, or to vary the analogy, a front-line trench, against the impact of unemployment.

For every bona-fide insurance scheme will have to impose some maximum limit upon the length of time during which normal benefits are paid. It is improbable that this maximum period in practice can greatly, if at all, exceed twenty-six weeks in a given year, although those who have built up a long record of contributions should probably be given a proportionately longer period of normal benefits. It was, in fact, the carrying of the unemployed for an indefinite time beyond the standard period of twenty-six weeks a year that was largely responsible for the former big deficits in the British system. If the insurance system is to be solvent, therefore, it will have to drop the unemployed from normal insurance benefits, as such, once this period has been exhausted. This will exclude from standard benefits a considerable percentage of the unemployed. For even in April, 1930, when the depression was just getting under way, 23 percent of the unemployed had been out of work for over twenty weeks, while the proportion today is, of course, enormously greater. To drop these workers outright and to throw a large proportion of them into destitution or into the arms of our inadequate system of public and private relief would be brutally cruel. It would also arouse such a storm of opposition as might well lead to an amendment of the insurance system that would saddle it with the costs of maintaining the unemployed for indefinitely long periods. This

Aggregate Savings of Families by Income Groups, 1929



Each family group in this chart represents 250,000 families; each circle $500,000,000. The chart is reproduced, by permission, from "The Need for Economic Security in United States," edited by Nordholm Schnapper for the Committee on Economic Security.

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would probably plunge the insurance system heavily into debt during periods of depression and would discredit the insurance features of such a plan.

The way out seems to be through the creation of a state-financed system of emergency benefits to carry those in need for an additional period of not more than from twenty to twenty-six weeks. This is the method now used in Belgium, Switzerland and Germany (though reversed under the Nazis). Thus, in Belgium, where the Ghent system of a subsidized voluntary plan is used, at an early date a National Emergency Fund was set up to pay allowances for the dependents of the unemployed and emergency benefits. Eighty-five percent of these benefits is provided as a government subsidy to the voluntary insurance funds and 15 percent is furnished by the latter. In Switzerland, the federal government pays the cantons proportions ranging from one-third to three-fifths of the amounts that they disburse for emergency benefits. In Germany the original act provided that after the standard benefit of twenty-six weeks was exhausted, there was to be a further period of emergency benefits financed by the government. The length of this emergency period was continually altered, but up until the fall of 1933 four-fifths of this cost was met by the federal government and one-fifth by the municipal authorities. After this emergency period was in turn exhausted, the needy unemployed were finally thrown back upon poor relief, which was largely, although not wholly, financed by the localities.

The British system has developed somewhat similarly through an interesting process of evolution. In 1930, the Labor government transferred the entire cost of the so-called extended benefit from the insurance fund as such to the national budget. These payments were, however, more or less automatic and were independent of need. Then with the coming of the National or Tory government in the fall of 1931, the means test was imposed upon those who had exhausted their claims for standard benefit. The determination of needs was, however, decentralized and put in the hands of the local Public Assistance Committees, which were the successors of the old Poor Law Committees. No national standards governing the determination of needs were promulgated and the relative severity or ease of these standards depended primarily upon the political balance of power on these committees.

The Unemployment Act of 1934 has made the cost of maintaining all of the needy unemployed who are either outside the scope of the unemployment-insurance system or have exhausted their claims to benefit, a charge upon the national government instead of upon the localities. This is a sharp reversal, so far as this class is concerned, of the practice initiated by the Elizabethan poor law. For the principle of the exclusive responsibility of the localities for the poor has meant in practice that the charges were heaviest upon those communities that were least able to bear them. An Unemployment Assistance Board has been created to help administer the Act which will set up a national system of administration with local advisory boards and with representatives of the workers sitting on the various local tribunals. The assistance is to be on the basis of need, but the criteria for determining needs are to be laid down through national rulings and hence removed from local whim or prejudice. Some of these criteria are, indeed, quite liberal. Thus, the first $125 (25 pounds) of savings or home ownership is exempted from the consideration of family assets. Furthermore, every additional $125 of savings up to a total of $1,500 will be treated as the equivalent in income of only approximately $13 a year. Small savings are, therefore, primarily treated in terms of income rather than principal. Moreover, additional facilities for training and voluntary occupation are provided.

The lesson for the United States would, therefore, seem to be fairly obvious. (1) The contributions by the federal, and indeed by the state, governments should be used primarily to establish a system of emergency benefits for those who exhaust their claim to standard benefits. Further protection would thus be offered to those who had terminated their normal benefit period and were still out of work, as well as to those who lost eligibility from the requirement that not more than one week's benefits should be paid for a given number of weeks' prior contributions, which might range from three to five. (2) Approximately three-quarters of the cost of these emergency benefits should be met by the national government and one-quarter by the states and localities. This depression should have taught us that prolonged unemployment is a national responsibility that should not be rolled off upon the localities. For a submerged area with 50 or 60 percent of its population on relief cannot carry its burden. Nor can the financially weaker states. The federal government, with its power to get at the large incomes and excess profits received in the metropolitan areas of the country and with its superior credit facilities, should properly bear the major portion of this load.

Once governmental responsibility for emergency benefits is recognized, the problem of contributions to pay for the standard benefits becomes simpler. These may be paid either by the employer alone or, in order to make the benefits more adequate and democratic administration more likely, by employer and employee jointly. Incidentally, the provision of the emergency benefits from other than insurance sources should lessen the opposition of certain honest purists who have dreaded to see indefinite burdens heaped upon the insurance system itself. (3) The emergency benefits should be paid for a limited period of time, which probably should not exceed twenty-six weeks. (4) The benefits should not be flat sums, but should instead be graduated ac-

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cording to need. While the decisions as to need in individual cases will have to be made by local committees, standard rules should be worked out and promulgated by the national authority. The most sensible standard to be followed here would seem to be the standard of income received rather than capital holdings. Thus, if a person had savings equal to $2,000, from which he drew an annual income of $100, he should be credited with the latter and not the former. The same standard should be followed in the case of those who owned their homes. The total income from all these other sources would then be credited against the maximum emergency benefits that were payable and the unemployed person would receive the difference. This would remove any necessity for the unemployed worker to exhaust his savings, cash in on his insurance policy or mortgage his home before he could receive emergency benefits. (5) In return for the emergency benefits, coming as they would from the state, the unemployed should be required to do work of a public nature or to take training that would fit them for work in private or public industry. This would require the preparation of adequate projects of an improved C.W.A. type, and the placing of the unemployed in them with due regard for their occupational skills.

A considerable amount of work could be obtained from this group in the carrying through of a program for slum clearance, housing and the development of parks, playgrounds, etc. The pay for work of this nature should be roughly equal to the going rates, and the unemployed in receipt of emergency benefits would not be required to give more labor at these rates than the amount of their emergency benefits. Thus, if an unskilled person received $6 a week in emergency benefits, and the going rate for this class of labor was 40 cents an hour, he would typically be required to give in return fifteen hours of work a week.

When these emergency benefits, in turn, were exhausted, then would come the need for straight relief administered from the relief stations rather than the employment offices. While a goodly share of these costs might be borne by the localities, it would be a great mistake to have them all so met. For if they were, the depressed areas would have to lift themselves by their own bootstraps. A widening of the geographical basis for support through state and federal aid would permit the wealthier localities to aid in meeting what is, after all, a national problem. There is need, therefore, for a thorough overhauling and a greater centralization of our poor-law administration. And this problem cannot be shirked or allowed to return to its pre-depression status.

It is highly important that some such provisions as these should be included in whatever national and state acts are passed. Unless emergency benefits and ample relief provisions are provided to buttress unemployment insurance, we are likely to blunder into the next depression with inadequate defenses and with an overoptimistic faith in what mere insurance as such can do. In constructing a very essential front-line trench, we should not, therefore, neglect those successive second, third and fourth-line trenches that are almost equally necessary. For the onslaught of a modern depression is likely to be extremely severe, and ample reserves are needed if the standards of life of the people are even partially to be maintained. The wealthy and the prosperous corporations will naturally be opposed to such a frank facing of responsibility, since it will mean heavier taxes for them. But there is every reason for the masses of the people to throw up those breastworks which they are likely to need badly in the future as well as in the present.

PAUL H. DOUGLAS.

The sixth article in the series on "Security for Americans" will be a discussion of old-age pensions by Abraham Epstein.—THE EDITORS.

Washington Notes

Spending vs. Economy—Will Hopkins and Ickes Break the Budget?—The Comforting Mr. Richberg

NOT UNTIL his budget message to the Seventy-fourth Congress is released next month will the burning question be answered as to whether, in the fiscal year 1935-36, Mr. Roosevelt intends to follow the path of retrenchment or instead intends to expand his spending policies in still other directions. Mr. Roosevelt himself, I am reliably informed, is still a trifle uncertain about his direction. By the time this week's The New Republic appears he may have reached a final decision, but I doubt it. Further, if I am not mistaken, it is one of those issues that will be compromised in the usual Rooseveltian way, although the general feeling is that he will lean somewhat more toward the spending side than the other.

There are plenty of people to remind him of his message last January, in which, after outlining his spending program for 1933-34, he declared his belief that in the following fiscal year expenditures must be kept within revenues. At the time, that expression was very generally applauded, particularly by the Eastern metropolitan press, which seemed to think that the President had set a definite time and debt limit and would shut off the flow of federal funds this year. Such, of course, was his intention, but it seems perfectly plain that it is not his intention now. Things did not work out as he expected—not by a great deal, they did not. Instead of private industry's absorbing the bulk of those on the relief rolls and the N.R.A.'s putting millions back to work, the year winds up, according to Mr. William Green of the American Federation of Labor, with 520,000 more men without jobs than there were last December. In addition, Mr. Green points out, there are three million more people dependent on federal relief for subsistence, and the cost of relief has mounted nearly 20 percent. For this situation Mr. Green assails industry, which he accuses of refusing to cooperate with labor in reducing the ranks of

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the unemployed. Regardless of the merits of this accusation, these figures of Mr. Green—coming at the close of a year in which we are supposed to have made progress and during which private business unquestionably has greatly improved—are certainly disturbing and discouraging.

In the face of such facts, it seems to me manifestly impossible for Mr. Roosevelt even to approximate carrying out at this session his last January retrenchment plan. On the contrary, the men upon whom he most strongly leans at this time—Mr. Harry L. Hopkins of the F.E.R.A. and Secretary Harold L. Ickes of the P.W.A., have evolved plans which, if even partially adopted, will make the budget-balancing prospects far more remote and much less robust than they are now—and few would say at this time that they are either imminent or healthy. To both Mr. Hopkins' scheme of work relief as a substitute for the direct federal dole and Mr. Ickes' broad housing program the President is believed to be sympathetic. Certainly both Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Ickes consider him so and they will be deeply disappointed if he does not give them the kind of support that will ensure adoption.

One estimate is that the expenditure of approximately $9,000,000,000 in two years will be necessary to put the Hopkins-Ickes ideas into practical effect. No one needs to be told what the spending of even half that much will do to the budget-balancing idea, and no one needs to be told either that the suggestion is anything but popular with the frequently mentioned business and financial leaders, who are "coöperating" with the President on the theory that he is now veering toward the right. That in face of the possibility—some think probability—that the bill for immediate payment of the bonus will pass over a veto, anyone should have the temerity to propose a $9,000,000,000 expenditure whether for two years or five, seems to the conservative gentlemen in touch with the President simply shocking. They are doing their best to impress upon him what they consider the danger to the federal credit in this proposal, and, I am informed, have succeeded to some extent in frightening Mr. Henry Morgenthau, Jr., the aggressive young Secretary of the Treasury. Of one thing I am quite certain, and that is that both the Hopkins and the Ickes plans will be extremely popular in Congress.

Another shock that some of the more important among the business leaders sustained during the week was the realization that, so far from having lost caste, Mr. Tugwell apparently is closer to the President than before. About the time Mr. Tugwell returned from Europe there was an outbreak of stories from Washington to the effect that while he was to retain his position as Under-secretary of the Agricultural Department, he would be relieved of policy-forming work and could then concentrate upon administration. The purpose of these stories was to encourage the idea that the Professor, having become a political liability, was to be relegated to the rear, and this idea met with an enthusiastic reception in the reactionary camp. It was an idea that did not live long. Mr. Roosevelt himself killed it by sending for Mr. Tugwell to come to Warm Springs, keeping him there nearly a week, having him sit in on nearly every conference and really seeing more of him than any other Warm Springs visitor.

It is interesting, I think, that just as Mr. Tugwell continues to be the most conspicuous liberal in the administration, not excepting Secretary Ickes, Mr. Donald Richberg, head of the National Emergency Council, is now looked upon as the leading conservative. Among the bigger business men, Mr. Richberg has in fact become something of a hero. They quote his speeches as expressing a thoroughly "sound point of view" and profess great gratification that he is so close to the President. Unquestionably Mr. Richberg's recent denunciation of inflation as unthinkable and his declaration that no one need fear that it will come was taken as reflecting Mr. Roosevelt's view on inflation. He has made it as clear that he is opposed to inflation as that he is in favor of profits for private business, and he has done both several times. But, somehow or other, every time he says so, or someone close to him says so for him, the business interests all seem to thrill as if it were entirely new and they were at last assured that the President is "sound at heart."

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Poor Little Orphan N.R.A.—Don't Worry About the Press—Bank Deposits Freeze Solid

A SURPRISING scrap of information comes to me. In 1933, when the Chamber of Commerce was in the New Deal Lying-in Hospital being delivered of its fatherless brat, the N.R.A., Dr. Roosevelt, who officiated at the parturition, announced that if the child turned out to be a bad egg he would be the first to admit it. Now if he doesn't want to be the very last to admit it he had better hurry. For I am informed that even the imp's mother has turned against it. At a meeting of the directors of the Chamber of Commerce a few weeks ago, a secret vote was taken on several points. They included the policy of limiting production and fixing prices. The Chamber of Commerce has worked for these two principles for at least a dozen years. It sold the amazing folly to the ingenuous Roosevelt in 1933. But now the vote of the directors on production control stood two for and thirty-six against. On price control the vote was three for and thirty-five against. Very soon the only man for this nonsense left in the country, outside the President, will be Mr. Donald Richberg. He still uses mouth-filling words about controlling destructive competition. If you leave out wages and hours, the only competitive practices that business is really interested in controlling are prices. And now business is coming to find that that is hopeless.

The New York Stock Exchange has sent out a questionnaire to its members throughout the country to learn what is happening to public sentiment about the Exchange in their respective communities. One of these questionnaires has drifted into my hands and I would like to answer the question for my community. The question is:

"Are your newspapers willing to take specific articles giving the facts?"

Oh, yes indeed. Our newspapers (New York City) are

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most cordial. In fact, I think that on the whole you need not fret about them. One or two give you an occasional dig in their editorial columns, but the news columns are just dandy. I particularly recommend The Times. It carries a splendid department every week by a Mr. Lokey. It is printed double column and in type twice as big as the rest of the paper. Really, you could not possibly do so well if you hired Mr. Lokey yourselves. The Times has thus provided you with a publicity agent at its own expense.

And did you notice a few weeks ago the nice piece right on page 1 of The Times, by this same Mr. Lokey—an interview with Mr. Richard Whitney himself? It was so fine, in fact, that the Exchange later printed this interview as a pamphlet and sent it around the country. "Reprinted from The Times" made it so much more effective than if it had been labeled "Written in the Exchange." Oh, yes, don't worry about our papers. They are just grand to you.

Our famous quarterback, the President, has pulled something unique in the technique of football attack. He has slipped the ball to the cheering sections. For those who are a little bit fooled by the blast of ballyhoo for the new policy of recovery by cheering, here are a few figures that get little attention in the newspapers.

Deposits in Federal Reserve member banks last year, according to the Reserve Board, were represented by the index number 104.7. This year they are represented by the index number 136.7. This is an increase of 30.5 percent. Meanwhile, loans have decreased from an index number of 78 to 69, a decline of 11.5 percent.

Where did all these fresh deposits come from? Either people deposited actual money, the banks created it by means of loans or the government put the money in. As to actual deposits, there has been an increase of $1,500,000,000, in gold, outside the expansion of gold values by devaluation. This gold flowed to us from various sources, some from hoarders, some $350,000,000 in gold settlements of international balances, but chiefly as payments on capital obligations abroad and government purchases.

But this would not account for an increase of 30.5 percent in Reserve member-bank deposits. Of course, the banks did not create these deposits by means of loans, since loans declined 11.5 percent. In fact, the decline in loans would wipe out over one-third of the deposit increase flowing from new gold. Where then did the deposits come from? From government financing. The banks have been buying government securities on a great scale for the last year. And the funds paid the government for its bonds have, of course, made no diminution in the amount of deposits. At the same time the funds paid out by the government for relief, subsidies, etc., have flowed right back into the banks to increase the deposits. Thus these government spendings out of borrowing sooner or later find their way back into the banks, where they are trapped in the absence of private borrowing until the government borrows them again and gives them another brief journey through relief and subsidy operations. In the last month bank loans in ninety-one cities declined $162,000,000.

When that loan account actually goes up there will be some little basis for cheering, but only a little. Because after all it is long-term borrowing, not short-term bank borrowing, that will give the capitalist buying-power machine its necessary acceleration. And all this time the long-term financing of private industry remains almost at a standstill. Last month (November) new financing amounted to $99,908,000. This was hailed as a great improvement over November last year, when it was only $18,953,000. But the great bulk of this financing was public. Municipal finance amounted to $76,728,000. Much of that was just refinancing. The balance was for relief. The Republic of Finland added another $10,000,000, also a refinancing job. Private financing was only $13,000,000, which was only $3,000,000 more than last year and far below October of this year—the smallest for any month this year in fact. And of this, the bulk—$10,000,000—was the Northern States Power issue, which was a refunding mortgage operation. The actual amount of new money brought into business by new financing, therefore, is $3,000,000 at the most. And if this were examined closely, much of it might disappear.

This is the point at which the Wall Street lawyer should rush on the scene and shift the motif. You see, the theme of the boosters is merry music played to the crooning of "Happy Days Are Here Again" because financing was so large. Now it suddenly changes to the shivery music that presages doom and accompanies, in this case, the declamation that happy days are *not* here again because the Securities Act is holding up new financing. We need not discuss that old story here. But one point is interesting. A few days ago the Chesapeake Corporation filed for registration a proposed new issue of $18,000,000. I recall that during the discussions of the Securities Act, Wall Street lawyers declared dolefully that the mere preparation of the certificate for registration would cost from $150,000 to $300,000. Now the Chesapeake Corporation, which is a pretty complicated concern, declares that the cost of preparing the certificate was $60,000, which is very much less than even $150,000. It amounts to only a third of one percent of the proposed issue. Try to borrow money on your home on a mortgage. See what percent of the loan you will pay for title examination and preparation of the papers, to say nothing of the cute little bonuses that will be worked off on you. And, strangest of all, the Chesapeake Corporation has actually registered a proposed issue and taken a chance on all the vast, incomprehensible and horrific penalties that are supposed to deter our timorous business men.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

The Heart of Man

This is the tree that cannot be overthrown,
These are the branches that leafless can still cast shade,
Here is the bud which canker may claim for its own
Yet cannot devour. Oh, this tree was made

For you—for your uttermost need, for your black despair:
Though the whirlwind bow and the earthquake heave at its root,
It will rise in beauty and strength through the darkened air,
It will flower, it will bear fruit!

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JOSEPHINE JOHNSON.

On the Labor Front

Bad News from Here and There—The Apprentice Racket—Scrip and Company Stores—Juggling Cement Stocks

DURING the past few weeks quite a number of news items have accumulated in a folder that I have labeled "New Deal: Anti-Labor Tendencies." The chief purpose of this folder, I should explain, is to afford a repository for miscellaneous fragments of information that are not easily classified by themselves. Few of the items, taken individually, are of the type that gets into the headlines, and some, indeed, did not get into the daily press at all. Taken together, however, they present a disturbing picture of labor's fortunes under the New Deal.

Item number one concerns the announcement from Washington that N.R.A. officials have granted the requests of fifteen firms for exemption from code hour limitations. These requests were approved, according to the United Press, because of a shortage of skilled workers. If true, this would certainly be good news to those who are worrying about the unemployment problem. Unfortunately, there seems to be conflicting evidence. The Jewelry Workers' Union of New York City, noting that eight of the exemptions were granted to jewelry manufacturers, points out that of 5,000 jewelry workers in New York only 1,500 are at present employed. The New York World-Telegram must be given credit, however, for making the most of the N.R.A.'s action with the headline "Labor Shortage Is Bared by N.R.A." It's been a long time since news of that sort has appeared in the papers.

Item number two also concerns a type of "labor shortage" that requires letting down the bars of code provisions. Most codes provide that the proportion of employees who can be classed as apprentices and paid less than minimum wages must not exceed 5 percent. This restriction, The Journal of Commerce suggests, must be modified, "due to the establishment of new factories and the removal of plants to new locations where little industrial skilled labor is available." What The Journal omits to say is that many manufacturers are deliberately moving their plants into non-industrial areas for the specific purpose of evading minimum-wage provisions. In Massachusetts the exodus of shoe plants to rural districts has already reached such proportions that officials fear that all shoe manufacturing in cities may shortly be abandoned. It is difficult to believe that the N.R.A. can approve of such tactics, yet applications for exemption from apprentice restrictions have been approved and, naturally, more applications are now pending. In some instances, permission is being asked to employ as many as 40 percent of "learners." To grant such applications, obviously, is to give the manufacturers aid and incentive to break down minimum-wage provisions.

Item number three is the Code of the Pecan Shelling Industry, recently approved by the National Industrial Recovery Board. This code, I believe, marks a new low. It provides for a minimum wage of $6 a week ($6.40 was the previous low) in the "Southern area" where, of course, 99.44 percent of the pecan industry operates. Moreover, this minimum, low as it is, has a dubious value, since pecan shelling is frequently performed on a piece-work basis and the code contains no piece-work rates. The code stipulates a forty-hour maximum week "except" for a six-week period in which forty-eight hours are permitted—a period sufficiently long, presumably, to cover the pecan-shelling season. It may be said, of course, that this industry is not very important, that only about 15,000 workers are involved, yet these considerations hardly absolve the administration from being a partner to an agreement that permits such disgraceful exploitation.

Item number four is the report of a special committee appointed under the Retail Code to investigate the use of scrip in company-owned stores. The committee found that food prices in company stores are from two to ten percent higher than similar prices in neighboring stores. The practice of discounting such scrip for cash is widespread, the rate of discount varying from 10 to 30 percent. Instances were found where workers had not been paid in cash for years, and were thus forced to trade at the company store. In one case in West Virginia "the company had not even gone through the formalities of having a cash pay day in the last two years." It is well known that industrial and especially mining companies have long used scrip and the company store as a means of keeping their employees under constant obligation—frequently in a condition of virtual peonage. It was hoped that the Retail Code might be used as an entering wedge to end this relationship, by prohibiting retailers from accepting scrip or company checks as payment for merchandise. However, the present committee, which has been studying the problem since last March, concludes that the "effective correction of such evils as exist cannot be fully achieved under the retail code." Accordingly, it now seems probable that the provision in the code against the use of scrip, which was stayed pending the committee's report, will now be modified or dropped altogether. And company stores will continue to enjoy rich profits.

Item number five is a statistical chart on the portland-cement industry, recently prepared by the Research and Planning Division of N.R.A. That does not sound very exciting perhaps, but the chart tells one of the most amazing stories that have yet come out of the N.R.A. The Blue Eagle, weekly newspaper issued by the N.R.A., prints the chart in its issue of November 12 and comments:

> One of the most striking developments in the portland-cement industry is the modification of the wide *seasonal swings in cement stocks during 1933 and* 1934. This change may introduce an element of stability in the finished-cement market, but it may also tend to accentuate the seasonal swings in employment and, to a greater extent, in man-hours.

Looking at the chart one can readily see what this new stability in the cement industry means. Before the depression cement stocks fluctuated between fifteen and thirty million barrels in each year. (Stocks rose during the winter period and then declined during the summer and fall.) The pre-depression employment curve, however, stayed on a fairly even keel, fluctuating within a cycle of about 10 percent. In 1933 and 1934 the picture is just reversed. Stocks have been held on an almost constant level of around twenty million barrels, while the employment curve has gyrated wildly in response to seasonal demand.

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Thus the cement industry has apparently achieved the dream of every industrialist, monopoly bent. The seasonal fluctuations in demand have been virtually eliminated from inventory and transferred to the payroll. As a result, the cement workers, who formerly enjoyed a fair degree of security through constant employment, are now subject to the hazards of layoffs as seasonal demand dictates. These results of "stabilization" in the cement industry cast an ironic light on President Roosevelt's recent request of the automobile industry. His request was for it to stabilize itself and "regularize" employment!

WILLIAM P. MANGOLD.

It Happened Once More

FRANK CAPRA is not the genius of the age, but he is a careful, talented director who has made a Hollywood success and earned an office of his own, and still not been taken in by blobs of gilt. Thus far he has used his prerogatives as a sure-fire money maker to hold out on one important thing: it will either be good comedy before he is through with it, or he won't be through with it.

His latest production for Columbia is "Broadway Bill," the story of a young man who got stifled by the smell of his in-laws' money, and went back to horse racing, and got overtaken by a good many disasters, but finally won the Derby, bringing all to their senses and himself to an appreciation of the rebel kid sister and so forth. If you look at it that way, there is little there. It is nice to see someone stand on his own legs and abuse the filthy rich, and the horse race is pretty exciting: but anyone can do that. Where the film stands out is for its incidental human warmth and naturalness; and more than anything, for its continuous sideshow brightness. There is a crazy tie-up between the race horse and the rooster, with the latter crowing at odd moments and the former chewing around on its tail feathers; there is a drinking scene, and one of the neatest con-games you'd care to watch, and a break away from an unpaid meal that is so well worked out as to be a model for all directors in what, if we were speaking of music, we would be sure to call phrasing—everyone going on enough to deafen you, a perfectly atrocious hubbub, and yet every detail coming clear, so that you follow in each case why he is yelling, and what.

Where the film stands out, really, is for what Mr. Capra has to give it in the way of painstaking supervision (there is a certain individual stamp on dialogue, incident and smoothness of technical attack); and for what he can get out of all the people in it, which is a great deal when the people are as good as they are here. Anyone familiar with Warner Baxter's sad succession of recent duds might suspect the hand of God in his present transformation; those who saw Clark Gable in "It Happened One Night" will recognize, in Baxter's quick, breezy, off-hand naturalness, the hand of Mr. Capra. The cast is fine from top to bottom, including Walter Connolly, Raymond Walburn, Lynne Overman, Clarence Muse, Harry Todd. As for Myrna Loy, I have never seen her so fresh and touching and really lovable; but the hand here is her own, one feels, sensitive and firm. Mr. Capra has the wisdom of being able to mold them or leave them alone, as the case requires.

And where Mr. Capra himself stands out, after you have granted him intelligence, technical skill, a sense of character, is for his mastery of two of the most vital factors in comedy: timing and accent. There is no need to be too intellectual on this: it is merely the old difference between the man who can, and the man who can't, tell a joke—extended from the point in a two-line gag to the interwoven points of a sequence, and from the innumerable separate parts of a picture to their relative duration, the way they run into one another and carry along the mood without spilling a drop. And it is largely this precision and instinct for where the swing of the words or of the body should be, that makes everything so natural and irresistible here. (The René Clair pictures show the same thing, more complex, more highly developed.) "Broadway Bill" has faults, there's no denying that—an almost unbelievably false uplift in the end, a song about the split-pea soup and the succotash that is given too much extension, and Mr. Capra tends to repeat things out of his old pictures. In substance it is a little thing. But we can finish with it quickly and definitely by saying that it will be a long day before we see so little made into so much: it is gay and charming and will make you happy, and I am sorry to say I do not know recommendations much higher.

OTIS FERGUSON.

Some Exceptional Recordings

AMERICAN companies are beginning to record again; but in recent years almost all their good records have been pressings from European matrices. These have been issued here a few each month; but this has not taken care of all that Europe has produced; and so occasionally there are special releases. The Victor Company has just made such a release of records that are important because of the music and the artists. The list, that is, contains a great deal of chamber music, most of it very good, played by well known artists, some of them very fine.

For example, Beethoven's Sonata in A major for cello and piano, played by Casals and Schulhoff. The first movement is not very good after the opening, but Casals' phrasing in this opening is worth the price of the set; and he does equally miraculous things in the fine last movement. Schulhoff is excellent.

Then Schubert's wonderful Quartet in A minor, in a performance by the Budapest String Quartet, whose playing surpasses anything I have ever heard, in every respect: musical understanding, unanimity of purpose, perfection of phrasing and style, beauty of tone, etc., etc. The same group contributes a beautiful performance of Schubert's so-called Quartett-Satz *(i.e.,* single quartet movement) and a dazzling performance of Hugo Wolf's "Italian Serenade" that makes the work delightful.

I was especially interested in three works for violin and piano—Beethoven's Sonata in F, Brahams's Sonata in A and Schubert's Grand Fantasia in C—because they were played by Adolf Busch and Rudolf Serkin. It was Serkin who interested me; for I knew Busch to be a poor violinist with the reputation of a good one. And Serkin turns out to be marvelous. Busch's toneless and styleless playing could not be worse matched than with the tonally so warm and rich and musically so alive and sensitive playing of Serkin.

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Busch also leads the Busch Quartet in Beethoven's C major, Opus 59, No. 3, and Brahms's C minor, Opus 51, No. 1. His thin, puny, scratchy tone is not too good for the music in certain places; but it blends with the tone of the three other strings in a well sounding combination; and in all other respects—ensemble, style, spirit—the performances are superb.

Yehudi Menuhin's tone, which is so clear and firm in the concert hall, disintegrates and becomes sugary on records; and his style, which is so pure, becomes affected and precious. That is my criticism of his playing in Bach's Concerto in E major. In these respects it is quite inferior to the playing of the Paris Symphony under Georges Enesco, who happens to be one of the finest musicians of our times.

Arthur Rubinstein's playing in Mozart's Piano Concerto in A major is wholly worthy of the music—sensitive, warm, alive and aristocratic. Not so much can be said of the playing of the London Symphony (the London Symphony of two or three years ago) under John Barbirolli.

Mozart's Quintet for piano, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and horn is not very good Mozart; and the Taffenel Ensemble does not make it sound better by its performance with Schulhoff.

B. H. HAGGIN.

CORRESPONDENCE

Potential Plenty

SIR: There are two statements in Walter Polakov's article, "Potential Plenty" [The New Republic, December 12], that are open to serious misinterpretation. The opening line, "The product capacity of the United States has been weighed, measured and found wanting." should read, "The (actual) production of the United States has been weighed, measured and found wanting."

Since our study demonstrates that we could have had goods and services to the value of $135,000,000,000 in 1929 and the subsequent years (goods and services which would have satisfied the needs and reasonable wants of every citizen of the United States), the absurdity of the statement as it appears is obvious. We did not produce enough, but we could have produced an abundant supply by the simple device of using our *product capacity*.

Again, the last line of the second paragraph states that, "Had we, since 1929, operated our plants to the full extent for which they were designed, every American family could now have a $9,500 savings account." The sentence should have said, "Every American family could have consumed the equivalent of $9,500 worth of goods." The two statements are utterly incompatible and the version as printed is misleading.

The providing of better food, of a decent supply of clothes, of millions of modern residences and additional motor cars, does *not necessarily, or even probably, put money* in savings banks. . . .

HAROLD LOEB, Director,
National Survey of Potential Product Capacity.

New York City.

Utopia—Merriam Style

SIR: Here is a curious light on California and Sinclair. When I was in California reporting the campaign, a terrific scare was raised by the Merriamites over the immense army of indigents which, they alleged, was rushing by automobile into the state to participate in Upton's utopia. How large was this army? Russell Bevans, California Registrar of Motor Vehicles, writes me, November 23, 1934, that during August, September and October of this year, 14,765 more cars were checked into the state than in the same period of 1933. He implies that most of these people were [Mr. Cowley continues his discussion of Jules Romains on page 170 of this issue.—THE EDITORS.]

Assuming, however, that most or even all of them were seeking promised utopia, one would certainly expect a sharp decrease in non-resident cars entering the state since Sinclair's defeat. But, in the same letter, Mr. Bevans says, in answer to my question on this point:

> I find that there has been little if any decrease of non-residents entering the state since the general election of November 7. . . . The continued influx of indigent non-residents to California we find as the result of the $24,000,000 relief bond issue voted by the people on the same date, and a generous federal-relief program. The latter two reasons, we find, are most generally mentioned when unemployed non-residents are contacted at the border stations.

In other words, the relief bond issue that was proposed by Governor Merriam to the state just before the election as a direct attempt to offset Upton Sinclair's promise of a cure of unemployment is now helping to maintain the influx into California that Sinclair was accused of creating! Truly, defeated Upton continues to plague California.

Santa Fé, N. M.

WEBB WALDRON.

So How Can We?

SIR: Your review of Saroyan's book [The New Republic, November 7] is misleading.

I was brought up with him; I assure you he is not posing; *that's the way he is; he can't help it.*

Fresno, Calif.

YEP MORADIAN.

In Defense of Jules Romains

SIR: I am sure you will have a good many protests from your readers on behalf of Jules Romains' "The Proud and the Meek" after the spiteful review by your Mr. Cowley [The New Republic, November 7]. . . . Mr. Cantwell certainly seemed to touch the limits of absurdity in his review of the second volume [February 14, 1934], but he managed to remain civil and assumed a critical attitude. He merely allowed his political bigotry to get the better of him. Mr. Cowley has not even the superficial good manners of the American expatriate after the franc went up. Sour grapes seem to produce a bitter brew in your columns.

Westport, Conn.

WILLIAM MCFEE.

SIR: . . . I'm at loss to understand how anyone who has given much thought to the problem of achieving a synthesis of modern society, and who appreciates the necessity of handling countless characters, motives, themes and trains of action, and of doing all this without submerging himself in mere incident, detail or technique, can help but be excited by what Romains is actually achieving. The man may have his affectations and preciosities, but how can anyone deny him his vivid sense of narrative and character, his tremendous breadth of view, his sympathies and social consciousness? Romains . . . seeks to apply his determinism to *all* his characters and action rather than to reserve it merely for his treatment of the proletariat. Is it perhaps this Tolstoyan quality that Mr. Cowley cannot forgive?

Berkeley, Calif.

HOWARD JAY GRAHAM.

SIR: You are not quite fair, I think, to Romains in your two and a quarter columns explaining that he is a writer not worth notice. He advertises his own merits. Yes; let's shoot Shaw, Wells, and Gorky too. He is a bourgeois? So are we all: but steadily he has been, as a writer, on the right side in the class war. Do you remember "Le Vin Blanc de la Villette," with its story of the first motorbus drivers who broke the strikebreakers by charging the police cordon with their new monsters? In this book too, virtue and right seem to stay almost too markedly on the side of the Socialists (Clanricard, Jaurès) and the rich people like the Sammécauds and the Saint Papouls to be made too obviously dull and like yellowback-novel characters. . . .

London, England.

RAYMOND POSTGATE.

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Two New Plays

Gold Eagle Guy, by Melvin Levy. Morosco Theatre, November 28, 1934.

The Children's Hour, by Lillian Hellman. Maxine Elliott's Theatre, November 20, 1934.

IT SHOULD be said at the outset that the Group Theatre's new play makes a good evening.

The causes for this pleasure are several. In the first place the locale or the epoch is varied and essentially fantastic; it begins with the sixties in San Francisco and ends early in the morning of April 18, 1906. The hero of the story is Guy Button, who gets a start in a shipping company, loses his heart to the celebrated Ada Menken, reaches his climax when he manages to have the government millions stolen from his boat and the boat itself sunk, and in the end, just as his son is about to expose him, perishes himself, along with his son and his faithful clerk, in the earthquake. Into the story are set all sorts of characters, seen for the first time in the hulk of the beached "Mantic" of Boston, which has been turned into a barroom, and serves as the background for the first act of "Gold Eagle Guy."

If none of it is convincing the play is, at least, vivid. This vividness is enhanced by the costumes and by Mr. Donald Oenslager's settings, which are various, witty and delightful. The vividness and the variety are conveyed by means of the most careful group work on the part of the company. There are constantly small bits and passages in the play that amuse and divert. The stage movements and patterns are well contrived, much better than in the usual atmospheric plays of this kind, "The Farmer Takes a Wife," for example. Mr. J. Edward Bromberg, though the mere casting of him in the role of Guy Button is confusing, plays the leading part with a certain authority. Miss Stella Adler, costume and all, is excellent in the earlier scenes; and if she means very little in her last scenes, it is as much the play's fault as hers. The scenes themselves, though they fall apart and labor under spasmodic motivation, have yet an undoubted color and a certain suspense.

So much for the more engaging side of "Gold Eagle Guy." The shortcomings of the play itself consist most of all, perhaps, in a certain spottiness. There is a curious sense of nothing having been developed at all. You get character after character in scene after scene with an effect of projection, but not of progression—it comes over the footlights for the moment but does not move towards the final curtain of a drama. In a curious way the same can be said of the acting. The part of Guy Button, as it is written and as Mr. Bromberg portrays it, appears all of a sudden in the course of the story and from that on runs in and out of it. From Mr. Bromberg's performance, at least, I could not tell what he himself conceived the role to be. At moments Guy Button seemed lusty and forty-niner-ish, at moments a Shylock, megalomaniac, religious mystic, solitary soul, fiend, or variegated fiction.

Episodic strata of motivation—as, for example, in the painter—occur only to show an undevelopment that suggests the writing of amateurs. This case of the painter is a good one to point out, because a real motive appears when Guy Button, hardy, back from China, offers the young artist a chance on one of his boats so that he might not go soft in his painting. And there is a real dramatic possibility in the motive of the subsequent sterilization, or absorption, of the painter by the personality of his benefactor, plus the orgiastic security that gradually comes the painter's way. Or take Guy Button. Not only from Mr. Bromberg's performance, from the writing itself, it is impossible to tell just what motivations are intended for this character. I do not know when I am to take Guy Button's scene as intense, as semi-farcical, as a *grotesco*—the outer man mocking the inner—or as some demonic benignity driven here and there by his own profound powers.

As a whole performance from the Group Theatre the occasion elicits one piece of advice. Too many of the company, though they play conscientiously, do so with an amount of assiduity and insistence that takes the spring out of their results. I do not mean that they have any of the hammering of the old ham styles in acting, nor that they ladle their effects or punch every point. I mean that there is a certain joylessness that does not come from depth necessarily but from a certain laborious edge of attack. All forms of creation present the fruits, as it were, of an access of vitality. All creation begins and ends in delight, however quiet, however exuberant. In any performance, however tragic, fantastic or gay, the actor must seek a long and happy line, as if he liked his art and knew that it liked him.

For all that, this is a good theatre evening.

There is no play in town whose first two acts hold the audience to so strict attention as "The Children's Hour." Two young women have worked and slaved until they have a farm on which their school for young girls is established. One of the girls makes trouble and eventually confides to her grandmother that the relation between the two young heads of the school is what they call "unnatural." The grandmother communicates with other patrons of the school, girls are withdrawn, the teachers bring a libel suit. But since the aunt of one of them, an actress who has caused most of the trouble with her foolish talk, does not come to testify, they lose the case. In the end the girl is found out to be a liar, but by this time it is too late, one of the teachers has confessed that her inclinations, at least, have been of a sort to torture her when she thinks of them. She shoots herself. The woman who has done the accusing comes too late with her regrets and offers of assistance.

There are a number of excellent realistic portrayals, Miss Barbara Beals as Rosalie Wells, and especially Miss Florence McGee's Mary Tilford, the girl who causes all the trouble. Miss McGee's is, in fact, one of the best pieces of acting of the season so far. Miss Katherine Emmet plays the difficult part of Mary's grandmother, the accusing personage, with fine taste and breeding.

As for the last act nobody could play it. It constantly drops into the sort of adolescent banality that we sometimes got years ago at the Provincetown Playhouse or from the British Manchester school. Such drama is explicit rather than creative, and sepulchral rather than intense. For this dénouement of "The Children's Hour" a breath of science and good sense would, in life, have gone a long way toward clearing up the situation. If science and good sense are not to come into the scene, then we must have, created in the characters, a convincing intensity.

STARK YOUNG.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

More About Romains

SEVERAL correspondents have complained that I wrote a bad review of Jules Romains' "Men of Good Will" and, on the whole, I think they are right, though not for the reasons they express at great length. They totally disagree with my judgment of the book, holding that it revealed spite, blindness and personal rancor. For my part I feel that the judgment was essentially correct and that it will stand, with some necessary modifications, after the enormous novel has been completed. But I also feel that it was presented with not enough persuasiveness and too much dogmatism. Space being limited, I was tempted to enter the verdict without producing most of the evidence on which it was based.

This week the case has been reopened. In support of my statement that Romains is an inordinately ambitious writer who has tackled a job beyond his power to carry out effectively, I should like to offer three supplementary exhibits.

Exhibit A.—Throughout the eight volumes of the French text (and the three double-volumes that have so far appeared in English) there are wide areas of what I was taught to call low-pressure writing—that is, narration or description without depth or feeling or any other quality save that of filling space and presenting facts which may or may not be interesting in themselves but are certainly inessential to the story. Here are two passages that I am quoting only because they are typical of Romains in those dull and frequent moments when his imagination refuses to function and his feelings are dead. The first deals with Wazemmes, the idle apprentice; the second describes the flat where the Maillecottin family lived in decent poverty:

> He drank the coffee with milk, at fifteen centimes, which they had served him, in little sips. [Literally the sentence means that fifteen centimes had been served him in little sips, one centime at a time, but this is the fault of an often careless and generally monotonous translator; Romains is better in the original.] Just as he was on the point of ordering a more manly drink, he said to himself that he was due to meet Haverkamp in less than an hour, and that Haverkamp would surely offer him an apéritif before lunch. A glass of white wine followed at such a short interval by an apéritif would mean cutting his appetite—and probably indigestion or flatulence.

> The apartment, which was on the ground floor, comprised three rooms and a kitchen. Only the dining room looked out on the street. It was a room eleven and a half feet long by ten and a half feet wide, with a ceiling nine feet high. One of its corners was occupied by an old porcelain stove, set in a recess. . . . The recess and the stylobates were painted chocolate color. The wall paper presented, against a yellowish background, a double motif in sets of five, consisting of a little vase with stylized flowers and a horn of plenty. . . .

The point is that all these details are not only dull and meaningless in themselves but have nothing to do with the story. Wazemmes could have drunk his glass of white wine; he could have belched all afternoon without adding to or subtracting from the unimportant part he was playing. The Maillecottins would have had the same attitude toward life if their ceiling had been ten feet high instead of nine and if the paper in their dining room had been light pink dotted with forget-me-nots. It was Marcel Proust who passed a final judgment on this type of writing that, in his own words, "is satisfied merely to 'describe things,' to furnish a miserable listing of their lines and surfaces." It deprives objects of the emotional associations that alone make them real to us, and thus, "notwithstanding its pretensions to realism, it is the farthest removed from reality."

Exhibit B.—When a manufacturer embarks on an enterprise that is too big for his own resources, he goes to the bankers for more credit. When a French novelist embarks on a similar enterprise, he also calls for loans, but the bankers he visits have other names than Morgan or Rothschild: they are Stendhal, Balzac, Hugo, Gide, Barrès. He compensates for the poverty of his knowledge or feeling by the wealth of his literary memories.

This is the course that Romains has followed too often. In scene after scene and character after character one can recognize his debt more especially to Stendhal, but also to the other great French novelists. Thus, young Jerphanion as a tutor in the household of the Marquis de Saint-Papoul suggests Julien Sorel, the hero of "The Red and the Black," in the household of the Marquis de la Mole. Jerphanion looking down at Paris from the roof of the Collège de France and dreaming of his future is like Balzac's young man, Eugène Rastignac, looking down from the heights of Père Lachaise and swearing to conquer the indifferent city. Gurau the deputy is a fair copy of Bouteiller, the politician-villain of Maurice Barrès's untranslated novel, "Les Déracinés." A dozen other parallels could be cited. There is of course no rule in literature that requires a novelist always to be original, never to copy the great archetypal scenes, but if he does copy them, on pain of death he must improve them, deepen their meaning, make them his own—and this is what Romains consistently fails to do.

Exhibit C.—This is a small matter, an incident involving only two characters, but it clinched my opinion of the book. The Countess Marie de Champcenais has a liaison with Roger Sammécaud, the oil magnate. She becomes pregnant and cannot tell her husband. After a visit to an abortionist she has a miscarriage just at the moment when an entertainment is being given in the park of their château and skyrockets are shooting above the trees. Her lover watches her suffer and helps her to conceal what has happened by carrying out the blood-soaked cotton and flushing it down the toilet. . . . The scene revolted me. I don't at all believe that a novelist should be forbidden to handle themes like this, but I feel that they ought to be approached with a sense of pathos or tragedy or degradation—in any case, with some sort of moral intensity. It is possible that Romains intended something of this nature and failed for want of sympathy and imagination. At any rate he described the scene in factual dull prose, illuminating nothing and omitting nothing, as if he were a butcher taking inventory or an exterminator's helper listing how many pails of dead bedbugs he had carried out of a rooming house.

I think these three exhibits will explain my reasons for not liking "Men of Good Will" and for writing about it with less reverence than is perhaps due to what will shortly

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be the longest novel in the world and the greatest masterpiece since last year's greatest masterpiece. If a note of irritation crept into my style, it was at least excusable. I had just been reading three volumes of undistinguished prose, fifteen hundred pages, and although they contained many exciting incidents and an ingenious plot, they had not repaid me for the time consumed and the eyestrain caused by them. I was also considerably angered by the critics who had been comparing the author with Balzac and Proust and all the dearest masters of French prose. As for Romains' political ideals, expressed both in his book and in his recent efforts to encourage a union of the semi-fascist French youth parties, I disagree with them violently but doubt that they played much part in my judgment, even subconsciously. His book is more dangerous to standards of good writing than it is to the proletarian revolution.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

The Definitive Lee

R. E. Lee: A Biography, by Douglas Southall Freeman. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Volumes I and II, 1,297 pages. $7.50.

UNTIL the publication of Dr. Freeman's life, the biography of the greatest Confederate remained in a singularly unsatisfactory state. Although I cannot make definite statements about Dr. Freeman's treatment of Lee's whole career, only two volumes of the complete four being now before me, it is yet easy to conclude that here, at last, is the definitive life. It is the most exhaustively documented biography in the entire field of Southern history, and in American biography as a whole it is challenged, I believe, only by Beveridge's "Lincoln," which was left unfinished. Not only is the documentation minute; the author's mastery of the material is perfect. Perspective, order and clarity of presentation are not invariably the accomplishments of the research scholar, but they are Dr. Freeman's accomplishments.

Only readers of Confederate history will recognize in true proportion the monumental task that Dr. Freeman has performed. Of the military biographies, Henderson's "Jackson" and Lytle's "Forrest" are alone definitive. Of the previous innumerable lives of Lee, not one brings together all the existing material, and not one makes a genuine effort to ignore the demands of the public, or sections of public opinion, for what at the moment the public wants Lee to be. There were, of course, two schools of Lee biography. The late Charles Francis Adams, I believe, gave us the first: although Lee was a rebel, he was a perfect gentleman who did his unpleasant duty in seceding with Virginia, and he was thus the very "type of loyal man" who might, in spite of being a rebel, be studied without moral injury even by New Englanders. The second school the South is responsible for—that of Thomas Nelson Page—a school of senseless worship that gave us a senseless, or more accurately, an insensate, Lee, a man who had doubtless once lived but whose living character became embalmed in the genteel defeatism of the Reconstruction generation. Although there are recrudescences, now and again, of the Adams view, the most recent being the life by Dr. Brooks of West Virginia, it was doomed, I think, even without the death blow dealt by Dr. Freeman's work, to die of inanition. The South, however, had already come to the more reasonable view that Lee was a great man who happened to be too perfect a gentleman for the inconsiderate and arbitrary decisions of war. Although he partially overcame this defect of his qualities as the war progressed, it did incalculable damage to his cause: he could persuade his subordinates but he would not coerce them.

It was a flaw of character in the sense of the tragic fault in the drama: it was a virtue turned by circumstance into a defect. If there is any thesis in Dr. Freeman's narrative, that is the thesis. A military genius second to none in the history of war was crippled, for his work, by the possession of those virtues that in this country were the special achievement of ante-bellum Virginia: purity of motive, disinterested public service, distinguished social life.

Although Dr. Freeman has ransacked hundreds of libraries, and has given us the results of his zeal in tracking down diaries of obscure persons who saw Lee perhaps once or twice, the new evidence does not materially alter our conception of Lee as a man. Where we had glimpses before, we now have an unprecedented richness of material: where we had divined the springs of Lee's action, we are now at the source. If there are no startling revelations of new traits of character, we must remember that the remarkable consistency of Lee, the self-mastery and the perfect integration of personality are as fully implicit in one moment of his life as in the whole. We expect, therefore, the definitive life to perform at least two services: that of correcting the unimaginative fancies of romantic biographers, and that of confirming the views of sensible men—and these services Dr. Freeman performs.

On minor points of fact Dr. Freeman has corrected every previous writer on Lee. The major correction bearing upon the interpretation of character presents us with an entirely new version of Lee's motives in going with the South. The author's elaborate and, I am convinced, final documentation of this episode destroys the romantic, floor-pacing, midnight struggle at Arlington. Dr. Freeman rightly concludes that Lee had made up his mind before he left his post in Texas, and that he awaited the secession of Virginia to do the only thing he could have done: join Virginia. The gradual development of this Virginian patriotism into the Southern attitude was quite normal, and characteristic of every Southern leader in the period of local feeling and States' Rights.

The great novelty of the new biography is its method of presenting the military campaigns. Dr. Freeman rigorously conducts the narrative in the original "fog of war" in which Lee and his lieutenants planned their operations. The method has distinct advantages, and I know of no other military biography in which it is used. It heightens the suspense of the narrative and it throws into sharp relief the genius of Lee: we know exactly what Lee knew at a given moment and no more. But it requires, for full understanding, a somewhat detailed knowledge of the Virginia campaigns. The reader must have the after-knowledge in order to follow the action, even though the protagonist is ignorant of his own position and even though the narrational fiction of our own ignorance is a useful device for emphasizing Lee's difficulties. For this reason the "fog of war" method will probably keep the new life of Lee from being a popular book.

It has, given the purposes of the author, no defects that I can discover. We may, I think, question briefly what seem to me to be certain limitations of point of view. Dr. Freeman writes from the conventional liberal view of his generation. The war, he says, was unnecessary: granted. But does that mean that the war could have been avoided? There is no real connection between these beliefs. Again, the war was fomented by politicians. That is a truth

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dangerously half-true: all popular action is so fomented. To argue this of the War Between the States at this late date is, I fear, to argue one's ignorance of the complicated social forces and backgrounds that preceded the war. For what Dr. Freeman is really saying is that the difficulties between the sections were "unreal": but by the same argument the present world crisis becomes illusory. The South fought against rising capitalism; and risen capitalism, crushing both agriculture and its own labor, creates the crisis today.

But with these issues Dr. Freeman has nothing to do, and rightly: he gives us the life of a great soldier. As we finish the record of Lee down to the death of Jackson, at the end of the second volume, we are aware that we have been reading one of the great military biographies. Yet in the historical background it is a little vague. Lee's early life is enormously documented; the history of his ancestors is minutely examined. But in the insight into that age there is nothing to distinguish the people of the early Republic from people under Louis XIV or from the sad citizens of the era of Harding. It is ungrateful to linger over such considerations: is there any connection between the vague way in which the early Lees are presented and the belief that the war was wholly fomented by politicians? There is—and I think the connection is made in a lack of historical imagination. But that is a constitutional weakness of the liberal point of view. One may expect, alas, at the end of the fourth and last volume, to see in Robert E. Lee the first Southern apologist of industrialism. I hope that I shall be proved wrong. ALLEN TATE.

The Forces Behind History

These Hurrying Years, by Gerald Heard. New York: Oxford University Press. 363 pages. $3.

MR. HEARD writes history with a purpose. He takes the twentieth century by decades, giving a resumé of events in each, followed by an appraisal of the "forces behind" as manifested in philosophy, science, art, morals, etc., and a final summing up of the "trend." A peculiar urgency is given to his presentation by the sense that change in the outer world, and man's perception of it, is proceeding at an accelerated rate. For the first time a human generation finds "fundamental ideas of man and the universe changing, growing old and dying, more rapidly than do our brief bodies." In consequence, this generation has already lived through several epochs. The failure of mankind to achieve a social mind capable of advancing with new knowledge, of directing new powers, means "the collapse of the social will under the strain of the internal conflict." We are facing this alternative today; tomorrow the die may be cast.

Mr. Heard is cautiously optimistic. In opposition to the realist, who holds that man is more and more subject to the conditions of his environment, he remains a "humanitarian," who believes that "the discovery which unites the new self-knowledge with the new outer knowledge . . . through a fundamental relatedness between inward consciousness and outward experience" affords a hope of final adjustment. Of this "subterranean adjustment" Mr. Heard finds evidence in the phenomena—political, social, intellectual, esthetic—that he summarizes so lucidly and impartially. That the spirit of man in the mass can accomplish this rebirth, is his faith; and since it must take place in the unconscious, Mr. Heard may be pardoned for not submitting a

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ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

The Great Doughface

The Eve of Conflict: Stephen A. Douglas and the Needless War, by George Fort Milton. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 608 pages. $5.

NO ONE need be surprised next spring if this biography of the great doughface, Stephen A. Douglas, gets the Pulitzer Prize: it has already been praised in the now familiar pre-Pulitzer vein by both journalistic and academic reviewers. One professional historian is quoted in the advertisements as saying in a New York newspaper that the book raises its author to "the front rank of American historians," and everywhere it has been welcomed in similar terms. As a matter of fact, it is a big book in more than one sense: it is based on prodigious research in the published and unpublished annals of political history in the decades before the Civil War, and Mr. Milton has kept his literary footing admirably through the tangled undergrowth of a vast documentation; as a narrative, it is close and clear, and it outstrips many a romantic novel in its reconstruction of the social and political weather of those lowering years.

But one cannot help wondering how much of the theoretical basis of the book its rather reckless reviewers accept. Perhaps Mr. Milton deserves to be recognized as one of our leading historians, but to a layman "The Eve of Conflict" would seem to be based on an almost boyish philosophy of history. The leading argument, of course, is that the Civil War was not the inevitable outcome of any profound clash of social forces, any profound disharmony of economic interests, but mainly of a series of five or six incidents that are "mere smudges on the face of history": these are "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Bleeding Kansas," Preston Brooks's assault on Sumner, the Dred Scott decision, Buchanan's hatred of Douglas and the attack on Harper's Ferry. "Chance," says Mr. Milton, "seems to have played as great a part as Fate in shaping the sequence of events," and certainly the suggested dilemma is a painful one. No doubt it depends on what you mean by both "chance" and "fate," but surely it is a curious view of historical process according to which any one of the six "incidents" mentioned can be isolated even imaginarily from the general stream, and then made to seem an avoidable and almost accidental affair. Such a picture is rendered superficially plausible by Mr. Milton's confining himself largely to the picturesque events of purely political history and the interplay of striking personalities, and by his making very little account indeed of the economic factors at work; but the whole enormous book does not convince one that the Civil War, though deplorable beyond expression, was a whit more "needless" than any great civil or international struggle.

Nor does it convince one of Mr. Milton's view of Douglas himself and the moral issues at stake, and again one wonders how much of the praise the book has won can possibly imply assent at such points as these. Douglas towers, in the picture of him here painted, not only above the Pierces and the Buchanans, but above Seward, Chase, Sumner and Lincoln; and certainly he was a powerful and magnetic leader. But it is impossible to be much impressed by his highmindedness or his humane idealism or even his foresight. His powers as "a good business man," his passion for real-estate speculation, do not lower him in comparison with the ruck of his contemporaries, but neither do they lift him much above them; and his long series of concessions to the political demands of the slaveholders, up to the point where these clashed hopelessly with the business interests of

his own constituency, cannot be divested of ignobility. He may have been "a realistic statesman," as Mr. Milton contends, but there is more than one attitude possible toward what constitutes realism in human affairs, and probably Mr. Milton's enthusiasm for Douglas is mainly based on his "sensible" attitude toward slavery and empire. Like the illustrious demagogue he was, Douglas roared for "the great principle of self-government," but the limits he drew to the number of selves whom he would include in its folds were the limits any petty office-holder under Pierce would have drawn. "I care more for . . . the right of the people to rule," he cried, "than for all the Negroes in Christendom. I would not endanger the perpetuity of this Union, I would not blot out the great inalienable rights of the white man, for all the Negroes that ever existed." And no one can be surprised to learn that he favored the annexation of Cuba.

To the Abolitionists and even the Free Soil leaders Mr. Milton, for all his professions of unemotional balance, alludes with unconcealed and sometimes pronounced contempt. It is extremely striking, and perhaps not without ominous implications, that his book should be issued by Boston publishers and praised by "Yankee" historians.

NEWTON ARVIN.

Infantry and Democracy

Democracy and Military Power, by Silas Bent McKinley. New York: The Vanguard Press. 313 pages. $3.

IN THIS book there is advanced a new theory of historical interpretation, namely that the technological development of military equipment determines to a large extent the form of government in any country at any given time. When the masses are able to obtain and easily learn the use of the best available weapons, he says, democracies may be born; they then live until there are introduced new weapons beyond the reach of the common herd.

Mr. McKinley thinks that the infantry is the military body of the masses, that it must be supreme in order for democracy to exist at all. In trying to make out a case, he connects the eclipse of democracy with that of the infantry in both Greece and Rome. And he shows that feudalism and its knighthood grew out of the superiority of armored cavalry over infantry. The masses could not afford horses or armor. The supremacy of the knight on the battlefield continued until the Scottish spears, the English long bow and, finally, gunpowder, knocked him out of the saddle. He finds that the decline of democracy in the Western world began toward the close of the World War and that it was caused by the utilization of new weapons—gas, tanks, airplanes—on a grand scale. These new weapons, he says, being expensive and complex of operation, are weapons for dictatorship, not democracy. Nowhere does he indicate that economic conditions or ideas have anything to do with social change.

According to the publisher's advertisement, the author explains fascism solely by his new theory: "This volume presents the first logical and convincing explanation of the rise of fascism; it suggests, further, that this country will see an extension of fascist authority." While Mr. McKinley nowhere makes the literal statement that the sole cause of fascism is the high development of military weapons, he does say that "The past fifteen years, which have seen the perfecting of these new organs of war, have also seen the rise of dictatorships in Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Russia, and of fascist movements in many other countries."

He forgets that the fascists have not gained power in a single country by the use of armed force against armed and organized opposition. In what way, for example, did tanks, gas and airplanes put Hitler in power? He not only errs but contradicts himself when he says that the "Bolshevists in Russia also gained control of the government by modern military technique." According to his theory, bourgeois democracy does not fall while the infantry is supreme; and he has already admitted that up until the latter part of 1918 the infantry was supreme in the World War. Yet the Russian revolution occurred in 1917. And as to whether the revolution succeeded because of modern armament, the counter-revolutionists and the Allied interventionists were much better armed and equipped than the Bolsheviks. The latter, as a matter of plain fact, won over a better armed foe because of a mastery of revolutionary theory and because of the class loyalty of the Russian masses.

Mr. McKinley's general theory is both provoking and thought-provoking. Undoubtedly he tries to carry it too far. It may well be that improvements in military equipment have made obsolete the barricades, the hand-hammered pikes, the bombs filled with rusty nails and the other equipment of old-fashioned revolutions. It may also be that present dictatorships will have a longer life because of the new weapons at their disposal. Still, no matter how the instruments of death are perfected, they must be used by human beings against human beings. When a country turns against its dictator the army is likely to go with it sooner or later. Nowhere does Mr. McKinley disprove the ultimate success of mass revolt.

WALTER WILSON.

Not So Bad

O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories of 1934, edited by Harry Hansen. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

MY STATEMENT in this paper recently to the effect that the O. Henry collection was bound to be the worst story anthology of the year, sight unseen, was pretty close to the truth, but not enough so to justify that sort of sharpness, and perhaps I should eat a little crow. The editor was changed last year and now I find that the judges have also been changed (they are Burton Rascoe, Suzanne La Follette and John Erskine); and the result, while still being no great shakes as an anthology, is an improvement, and intelligently handled. Including the prize stories (Louis Paul, First; Caroline Gordon, Second; William Saroyan, Special Prize), there are nineteen published here, from almost as many magazines. I'd not award a prize to Mr. Paul's story: it has a harsh face, but a thin one, and lips rather twitchy from the strain of appearing in public; Caroline Gordon is a better, but still not a best, choice: she knows people and writes well, but much too much. Stories honestly effective, either for strength or beauty, are Faulkner's "Wash," Leane Zugsmith's "King Lear of Evansville" and (possibly it is a little weak) Edmonds' "Honor of the County." There are also good pieces by Benjamin Appel, Vardis Fisher, T. S. Stribling and John Steinbeck. In general, the best excuse for such a collection is the notice and payment that it has to offer several deserving writers: but this does not take into consideration the reader, who will find the book, read from cover to cover, rather flat stuff. In spite of the good pieces, it seems to be less in the main stream of fine writing than in some quiet and murky backwater of its own.

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Books in Brief

Candy, by L. M. Alexander. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.50.

THIS WINNER of a big prize-novel competition is a harmless, unnecessary book inevitably calling for speculation on the use of such competitions, and on the probable badness of the runners-up. It is a thoroughly conventional and sentimental tale of life on a South Carolina plantation, its flavor being much watered Julia Peterkin and its heroine a pale pink Sister Mary. Candy lived at Mimosa, the rapidly dwindling plantation of a white man known to his servants as "Little King." Candy loved a number of other Negroes not wisely but too well, but her heart was in the right place as far as Little King was concerned and she was too loyal to the plantation to desert it for Harlem, even when all the other Negroes did. All the props common to this type of fiction are here—the big house and the cabins, Negro dialect, a sprinkling of spirituals, possums and watermelons, magnolias and mocking-birds. At times it seems a mild parody of itself. M. G.

Adam's Daughter, by Wells Wells. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 437 pages. $3.

Woman has been matriarch and slave, secluded and free. In each case she always got what she wanted. The secret is out at last. It was she who "created" civilization. Man had nothing whatever to do with it. Mr. Wells learned about women from mythology, anthropology, theology, sociology and history, but he has a dialectic all his own. It consists of grinding all the grists in the world in one mill and distributing the resulting product in a cart before a horse. Athenian women were kept at home because they preferred security to responsibility. In Sparta they dominated too, through the mother principle, which tends to produce a militaristic state because mothers, though marvelous, are rather dull and men must have some excitement. In decadent Rome women were decadent with impunity, which again proves the author's contention, but, at the same time, in certain Germanic tribes they were being severely punished for adultery. It was what they wanted, of course, the protection of the "fertility principle." Women also created feudalism, chivalry, troubadours and all that sort of thing, which was greatly to their advantage. Of course the women serfs were not happy—not because they were women though, but because they belonged to an exploited class. Even so they were much better off than their husbands, who had all the responsibilities and who suffered so deeply in their self-respect through the *jus primae noctis*. And so on up to the present day. The most completely cheap and silly book I ever read, with no close second. C. G. S.

The Power to Love: A Psychic and Physiologic Study of Regeneration, by Edwin W. Hirsch, M.D. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 392 pages. $4.

The author, apparently a "liberal" sexologist, purveys a good many miscellaneous observations in his chosen field, most of them familiar enough, yet presented in so earnest and disarming a manner that even the most diffident of readers may attend without blush. For it is to the sluggish, the timid and the incompetent that Dr. Hirsch especially addresses his regenerative teachings, so to speak. Besides many breezy discussions of clinical cases, he offers, as the *pièce de résistance* of his closing chapters, a kind of *vade mecum* or manual of technique and craftsmanship. This is excellent and useful enough in its way, but of course need not be followed too literally by the amateur. M. J.

Five Hundred Delinquent Women, by Sheldon Glueck and Eleanor T. Glueck. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 573 pages. $5.

This is a companion volume to the authors' "Five Hundred Criminal Careers," published in 1930. In it are analyzed into no less than 380 different categories the lives of 500 women before they were committed to the Women's Reformatory at Framingham, Massachusetts—while they were there, after they were out on parole, and during the five years immediately following the expiration of their paroles. The findings will not be heartening to those who still cherish the illusion that reformatories actually reform. Although the Massachusetts institution was more intelligently and humanely managed than most places of its kind, only 15.2 percent of the women under study mended their lives after leaving it. And these 76 women were invariably superior, physically, mentally and socially, to the 424 who resumed their sinful ways; none of them had ever been in a correctional institution before, and their crimes all centered about sexual delinquency. And so, as the authors point out, they would probably have got along all right in the world even if their chance lapses from virtue had never been detected. G. A.

John Brown: Terrible "Saint," by David Karsner. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. 340 pages. $3.

This is one of those biographies whose publishers believe that it can "safely be called definitive," but John Brown is a character terribly hard to define. Mr. Karsner tries to reconstruct his boyhood from vague word-of-mouth legends that are not very convincing. For Brown's manhood he seems to have unearthed no important material that was not already used in the older biography by Oswald Garrison Villard. But chiefly this book suffers from the fact that its author cannot decide whether John Brown was a martyr or a maniac: sometimes he speaks of him sarcastically, and other times he is plainly maudlin (as in telling of Brown's second courtship, which took place less than a year after his first wife died from continual pregnancies); but nowhere does he show his ability to appreciate or visualize either madness or heroism.

Contributors

HAROLD L. ICKES, Secretary of the Interior, is also Public Works Administrator. "The New Democracy," a statement of his political philosophy, has recently been published by W. W. Norton and Company.

PAUL H. DOUGLAS, professor of Economics at the University of Chicago, is the author, among other books, of "Real Wages in the United States," "Standards of Unemployment Insurance" and "The Theory of Wages."

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON is the author of a novel, "Now in November," recently published by Simon and Shuster.

B. H. HAGGIN is the music critic of The Brooklyn Daily Eagle and lectures at the Brooklyn Institute.

ALLEN TATE has published two volumes of poetry as well as biographies of Jefferson Davis and Stonewall Jackson. He is now teaching at Southwestern University in Memphis.

NEWTON ARVIN, associate professor of English at Smith College, is now on leave of absence completing a new book. He is the author of a life of Hawthorne and of many reviews and critical articles.

WALTER WILSON has for the past two years been working on a book for Harpers entitled "The Unknown Soldier," the story of the common soldier in America's wars.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Martha Gruening, Clara G. Stillman, Matthew Josephson and Grace Adams.

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